NORMANBURN;

OR,

THE HISTORY

OF

YORKSHIRE FAMILY.

A Novel.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF HARDENBRASS AND HAVERILL

OR, THE SECRET OF THE CASTLE;

RUTHINGLENNE, OR THE WITCH OF COT-MUIR, COMMONLY CALLED MADGE OF THE MOOR;—CONIRDAN, OR THE ST. KILDIANS; AND THE HISTORY OF JULIUS FITZ-JOHN.

Stultitiæ nomine multa tegit.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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TO THE READER.

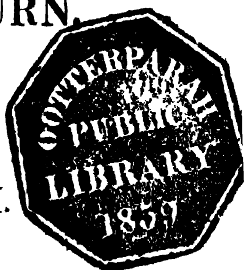
READER,

I SHALL detain thee no longer than to observe, that Normanburn is a plain, inartificial tale, which might well be entitled, the history of an unsophisticated mind. Any further remarks are unnecessary, if thou hast read Hardenbrass, and the other books, written by the same author. If thou hast not read those interesting Works, I recommend to thee to peruse them, forthwith, with

an assurance, that thou wilt be amply repaid for thy trouble: and take care not to skip over the prefaces.

THE EDITOR.

NORMANBURN.



BOOK I.

CHAP. I.

Which it is incumbent on all to peruse, if they intend to read those that follow.

IN that part of our island which is so famous for the production of good horses, and no less excellent jockeys; as well as many other admirable things, too tedious to enumerate, we mean in the county of York, lived a gentleman of the name of Normanburn, who, together with a daughter, a sister and a brother, inhabited a cottage (for it deserved no better

title) at the outskirts of a small village, of which we purposely conceal the name. Nor is this done either to excite the reader's curiosity, or to afford an opportunity to the numerous villages in the three Ridings and the Ainsty to contend in after ages for the honour of having produced our heroine! no such vain or malicious thought prompts this concealment; it springs solely from a desire to preserve peace in the county, and ourselves from the imputation of malice prepense.

It is not to be supposed that an author. who undertakes to write a true and authentic history, can, in these times, or, indeed, in any other, save and except the golden age (which we do not remember) have only good, wise, and virtuous actions to record,—on the contrary, folly and knavery, pride and tyranny, with a long list of amiable et cæteras, are incessantly at work to supply him with very different materials; and, to own the truth, a work with a due proportion of these

materials is much more likely to prove both pleasing and instructive, than one composed solely of examples of singular perfection, and never-before-beheld excellence. The reason of this must, one would imagine, be obvious to the commonest observer of nature; and we can only wonder that it should have escaped the notice of so many worthy people, who have wasted their midnight oil or tallow, while forming ideal characters, whose chief perfection, and which serves to crown all the rest, is, that they conduce in no small degree to lull the reader to rest. That which is out of nature cannot please, because it cannot interest; we only wonder at the writer's folly. This being the case, and we having ventured to represent the shaded, as well as the bright side of the characters mentioned in our work, with due prudence we carefully avoid pointing out the precise spot on which they resided, or even indicating the exact neighbourhood: suffice it to say, that Mr.

Normanburn lived in a romantic country, full forty miles from the capital of the county, and had almost as little intercourse with his own immediate neighbourhood, as with the Lord Mayor of York, that is to say, none at all.

Purlbeck Cottage, for that is the name we shall distinguish it by, was not of very modern date, nor were its apartments either lightly rustic, or elegantly gothic: it consisted of but few rooms of a moderate size, and whose chief recommendation was, being tolerably airy in summer, and warm in winter. The furniture was heavy, and rather antique; and, except a very few articles, the remains of what had formerly adorned a larger mansion, of a common kind. But, if the house itself had little to recommend it, this was not the case with the garden in which it stood, or with the excellent orchard that was attached to it; both were good, and extensive, and to own the truth, the family derived some comforts from the sale

of their products at a neighbouring market town. A high wall on the side next the village road kept out intruders, and behind were a few acres of land, that served to support a cow, and a poney, sometimes used to drag a little errand cart, and sometimes to bear the lovely person of Mabella Normanburn on her excursions to the village.

The family of Mr. Normanburn, as we have said, consisted besides himself, of his sister, his brother, his daughter, an old female domestic, who had lived with his mother, and a strong country fellow, who managed the garden, milked the cow, and did any thing else that he had time for. Humble as this establishment may appear, it almost exceeded the means of Mr. Normanburn, and his sister devised many expedients to save, in cases where the extreme of economy had before saved all it could, and to spare, where there was not the shadow of superfluity. Indeed, Mrs. Glassington

piqued herself upon her ingenuity in this way, and, if her brother had at all meddled or interfered in the affairs of the family, she would have incurred some blame, in circumstances where she imagined she was pursuing the most commendable, and prudent line of conduct. She was in all cases convinced that what cost least must be cheapest, and thought that a halfpenny a pound difference in the price of meat was too much to be given unnecessarily. The increased weight of coarse meat, or the size and quantity of bone, in that which was ostensibly cheaper, escaped her observation, and, once or twice, when her brother, Captain Lucius Normanburn, said that the Sunday beef seemed to cut a little to waste, she replied rather impatiently, "That's quite impossible, I'm certain, Captain! for it cost a penny a pound less than Parson Bleathead's crop,* and you

* Part of the ribs of beef.

shall never make me believe that there is not as much waste in the small, as in the large beasts."

"There is not so much *bone*," answered the Captain, looking at Mabella, "nor, I should think, so much *waist*," glancing his eye with a satisfied air towards his sister. Mabella laughed aloud, to the great delight of her uncle, and the mortification of her aunt, who had been once very proud of her person, which was now become a little too much inclined to plumpness.

On this, and similar occasions, when the Captain had had his jest, he was satisfied, and relapsed into his habitual taciturnity; Mabella was chidden for her want of good manners, and laughing at what she did not comprehend; and Mrs. Glassington was more and more confirmed in her own peculiar ideas. Indeed, there was one idea which was so firmly seated in her mind, that nothing could have shaken it; namely,

that she was the cnly person in the house who had common sense, and that without her superintending care the family would be entirely ruined.

CHAP. II.

An interesting Retrospect: containing a Love Story, but too true, and an Event common enough.

WE were unwilling to introduce Mr. Normanburn himself to the acquaintance of our readers at the fag end of a chapter, as he ought to be of some importance among the members of his own family, and was, in fact, rather a singular character. But, in order to account, rationally for his eccentricities, as well as for some incidents in this work, we must give a sketch of his history, which we doubt not will be satisfactory to the inquisitive reader.

The family of Mr. Normanburn was very ancient, and highly respectable, though it had never abounded in wealth. During the last three or four hundred years, (we are not quite certain as to the

precise year or century), his progenitors had possessed a moderate landed estate at no great distance from his present residence, and had formed respectable alliances; not much augmenting or diminishing their original possessions.

It so happened, that in the year 17-- there were two brothers of the family, the younger of whom, having been brought up to trade, had resided much abroad, and was a decided Whig; while the elder, who had from a fondness for the turf, contrived to involve himself in great difficulties, was as determined an adherent of the Tories. Either from the difficulties of his situation, or from some other cause of disgust, he was easily persuaded to resign the paternal estate into the hands of his brother, who paid his debts, and settled an annuity upon him; and, soon after he retired to France, where, after becoming a convert to the Roman faith, he died unmarried, leaving one natural son.

Mr. John Normanburn, thus become

the representative of the family, married a lady who brought him a considerable fortune, and several children, none of whom survived, but one only daughter. With great generosity, and humanity, he had educated Lucius, his nephew, who had always been called by the family name, and, in addition to the pittance, his father left him, he promised to bestow as much as should be necessary to establish him in that way of life, that was best suited to his genius and abilities. In the mean time the young man was frequently at his uncle's house, and a very early, and strong attachment took place between him and his cousin Mabella.

Mr. Lucius Normanburn had an earnest desire to be educated for the church, and his uncle, finding this to be the case, determined to send him to college, and to purchase a living for him, as soon as he met with one that was likely to be eligible; and during the vacations, he was always delighted to have his

nephew for a companion. Indeed, the latter so evidently won on his uncle's affections, that Mrs. Normanburn became jealous, and uneasy, and contracted a hatred for Lucius, that strengthened in the same proportion as did the love of her husband and daughter.

Mr. Normanburn was an easy tempered man, and after he retired from business contracted habits of indolence, that did not a little contribute to render his wife absolute sovereign of Normanburn House. To do her justice, for some years at least, she exercised this sovereignty with great propriety, and by some lucky purchases materially augmented the estate. When this was effected, she found that the old house was not capacious enough, and such additions were made, as rendered Normanburn House one of the most desirable residences in the country. Her next care was to look round the world to find a proper match for the heiress of this desirable

property, a lovely girl, now in her sixteenth year; and she had already cast her eyes on a young man, who would have an equally handsome fortune, when she was for the first time struck with the manner in which Lucius wished his cousin good night, on the evening preceding his departure to take his Batchelor's degree.

Mrs. Normanburn possessed great self-command, and though from the paleness of Mabella's cheek, the quivering of her lip, the tear in her eye, and the vain effort she made to speak, she was convinced her daughter loved the being, she herself feared, and hated, (very unjustly) several weeks passed over without any observation, or alteration on her part, that could lead any one to imagine she suspected, disliked, or feared any thing.

About the period we are speaking of, Mr. Normanburn was attacked with a lethargic disorder, which he himself presaged would be fatal; and he told his

wife that he was resolved to settle his affairs, and to provide for his nephew, according to promise. "Indeed," continued he, "the dear lad has been quite a son to me, and I will give him a son's portion." At this declaration Mrs. Normanburn gave no signs of disapprobation; on the contrary, she mingled with her tears of alarm and tenderness, so much alacrity in aid of his views, that the good man was fully persuaded, that she was decidedly of his own way of thinking. A Mr. Croker, an attorney, was sent for, and received instructions to prepare a will, which in the presence of proper witnessess, and when a little less oppressed than usual, the testator signed; and after that act, he lingered several months in a state of almost total insensibility, and then expired.

During these months, the most wretched Lucius Normanburn had ever experienced, he was not permitted to approach Normanburn House; and to all his

anxious inquiries by letter, he received no other answer from his aunt, but that Mr. Normanburn was much the same, and she would acquaint him, when any change happened.

Anxiety for his uncle, however, was not the young man's only grief, he was ardently longing to see his cousin, and to learn from her lips, whether his presumptuous hopes might ever be realized, or whether he must endeavour to conquer an affection, he had for so many years indulged. He was well aware how favourable for him would have been the season of sorrow and distress, if he had been allowed to see her; and he suspected that her mother had divined his secret, and purposely kept him away. A foreboding of evil rendered him wretched, and he at last determined to run all risks, and, if possible, to obtain an interview with Mabella.

For this purpose he came down secretly, and by night, to the village of

Purlbeck, and from thence travelled on foot to Normanburn House. He concealed himself in the plantations near Mabella's favourite walk, not doubting that she would, as usual, come there to take her exercise: in this he was not disappointed, and after waiting some hours he saw her approach, and pace, backwards and forwards, a little bye path they had often trodden together. She wept bitterly; and from time to time looked anxiously towards the house, as if expecting or fearing to see some one approach. At first, he was afraid of startling her; but aware how precious the moments were, he gained courage to pronounce her name softly, and to approach her. We will not trouble the reader with the particulars of an interview, that terminated in a mutual promise of fidelity, and that, during three weeks, was followed by many others, each one more pleasing than its predecessor.

At the end of that time, Mr. Norman-

burn's lethargy terminated in death, and Mabella was too truly grieved to have a thought to bestow on her cousin. Her mother, however, was not so forgetful; for she ordered Mr. Croker to summon Mr. Lucius to be present at the opening of the will, and on the fourth day after the demise of his uncle, the parties concerned being assembled, Mr. Croker, with proper snuffling and croaking, read what may be found in the next chapter.

CHAP. III.

The Story continued.—The Effects of maternal Solicitude and indiscreet Love-matches, with an extraordinary Stipulation.

THE party at Normanburn House being, as we said, assembled in the library, and the silence usual on such occasions being preserved, Mr. Croker, in an accent that bespoke his Scottish origin, and with a proper solemnity of countenance, read the preamble to the will, which consigned the soul of the deceased to the hands of his Maker, and his body to the family vault, and then proceeded as follows:—

"I give and bequeath all my property, real, and personal, houses, lands, tenements, water-courses," and then followed a list of various properties) "to my dearly beloved, and excellent wife, Wilhelmina Normanburn, to be for her sole and se-

parate use, and she is hereby authorized to receive and enjoy the same for ever, and to dispose of the same according to her own will and pleasure, as I am very certain, that she will in all things act like a Christian, and an affectionate parent; and I doubt not to meet my said blessed and beloved partner in a better world, where we may dwell together in the bosom of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, with our seven blessed innocents, who are gone before to a joyful eternity, and our beloved Mabella, through the mercies and merits of our blessed Redeemer, to whom be all glory, now, and for ever."

When Mr. Croker began to read, Lucius, who felt that the happiness or misery of his future life depended materially on the contents of the will, leaned his elbow on the table, and covered his face with his hand, not venturing to look at the almost fainting Mabella, or the calm, though apparently afflicted widow. As

he proceeded, astonishment and despair took possession of the mind of Lucius, and just as Mr. Croker pronounced "*now and for ever*," the unhappy young man, unable to struggle with his feelings, or to support their acuteness, sunk senseless on the floor.

Had the soul of Mrs. Normanburn been capable of the least touch of compassion, it would have felt it on this occasion; but that good lady, with a firmness of cruelty that would not have disgraced an inquisitor, or a Jefferies, viewed her victims with an exultation that shone forth at her eyes. To her daughter she spoke not! she left her to sob on the sofa, and employed herself in applying her salts to the nose of Lucius, who was not long before he recovered his recollection. As soon as he appeared perfectly sensible, she bid Mr. Croker proceed, and that gentleman finished his task without further interruption. When

he had done, Mrs. Normanburn made a sign to him to retire, and she then addressed Lucius in these words.

"You perceive, Sir, that your beloved uncle has constituted me sole executrix of this his last will and testament, and that his property is entirely at my disposal. As he always promised to provide for you indeed, he has in some measure done so by giving you an education, better perhaps than your birth deserved; but, as I was saying, as he promised to provide for you, I am willing out of respect to his memory to do what is proper on this occasion."

"Proper?" exclaimed Lucius, "Gracious Providence! proper?" "Yes, Sir! *proper*," replied the lady, "and I must tell you why your dear uncle left it to my discretion, instead of deciding himself what you were to have."

"Why, Madam? in what did I ever offend my uncle? when had I a thought that could have displeased him?" said

Lucius in a voice hardly articulate.—"When you thought of his daughter, Sir," returned the lady with a fiend-like grin ;" he saw your presumptuous hopes, and in order to prevent so disgraceful and detestable a connexion ever taking place, he left his property at my sole disposal. If I thought that girl, who lies groaning there, would ever stoop to think of you, I would banish her my presence for ever! This I now tell her and you, and you may depend upon it, that, should such an union ever take place, I would give all to strangers, and leave you both to starve, as you would deserve."

Mrs. Normanburn had proceeded thus far in this truly gentle, merciful, and maternal harangue, when Lucius, unable to contain his indignation, uttered a curse against her, that made even her iron soul tremble; then, clasping Mabella in his arms, he exclaimed, "Dearest victim! love me, my Mabella, love me for ever!

thou shalt yet be mine, I swear by the God who made us!" he then rushed from the house, and hastened, half mad, to Purlbeck cottage, which was inhabited, at that time, by a very respectable farmer. His agitation produced a fever, from which, after a confinement of several weeks, he at length recovered; and, as soon as he was able, he prepared to take orders, being resolved, when he should be in possession of a curacy and a cottage, to carry off his cousin, and trust to the yearnings of nature to reconcile Mrs. Normanburn to her daughter, even if he himself should not be forgiven.

Nearly two years elapsed before he was enabled to execute this scheme, during which time, Mabella underwent no small degree of persecution from her infatuated mother to induce her to marry another, and was told, daily, that if ever she married her cousin, she would have nothing from her, but a parent's curse; all this was of no effect; Miss

Normanburn became the wife of Lucius, and lived with him on a curacy in a market town at no great distance from her paternal mansion. Shut out from all hopes of reconciliation, and struggling with poverty, and privations, Mrs. Lucius Normanburn in this place became the mother of two sons, and two daughters; and, in addition to the sorrows of a narrow income, which Mr. Normanburn increased by teaching a day school, she had the grief to perceive, that his health was daily sinking, and that she should soon lose the only being who loved her, and the only protector of her helpless infants.

After the solemn declarations her mother had made of irreconcileable hatred, and the vows of revenge against her child for her disobedience, Mabella would never have been induced by any personal privations she herself might suffer to apply for assistance from this inexorable woman; but her husband was sinking

fast into the grave, and she thought that a very moderate portion of her father's wealth might yet save him. Unknown to him, she wrote to her mother, and represented her situation in colours and terms, that might have moved the hardest heart; but to this she had no other reply, than a note from Mr. Croker, now become Mrs. Normanburn's agent, stating, that that worthy lady would never have any intercourse with the wife of Mr. Lucius Normanburn. To many similar applications she had invariably the same reply, and at last she determined to see her mother, if possible, and to make a last effort to propitiate her.

It was not, however, so easy a matter to see Mrs. Normanburn, as the reader may imagine; for when she was in the country she had usually a crowd of visitors at her house, and the last two winters she had passed either at Bath or London: besides, she had told her houshehold, that whoever should dare to give her daughter

entrance at Normanburn House, would immediately forfeit his or her place. These precautions had the desired effect, and all Mabella's efforts failed: she lived eight years in a state of poverty and grief, with her beloved Lucius, who, about the end of that period, died, and left hardly enough to bury him.

The inhabitants of Burnthwaite, all in the neighbourhood who had known, or who did know Mrs. Normanburn, thought it impossible that now, when her son-in-law, the object of her dislike was dead, she could any longer keep aloof from her daughter, or forbear providing for her, and her helpless family, especially as she had often expressed a wish that there had been a male heir to the estate. But these kind-hearted people had reckoned without their host, for she remained equally inexorable, till, at last, even Mr. Croker himself, either because he knew he was blamed for aiding the old lady's resentment, or because he really pitied

the family, suggested that it would be better to do something. After a lapse of three months, Purlbeck cottage was prepared for the reception of the family, and in part furnished from the lumber room of Normanburn House; and, as long as Mrs. Lucius forbore to trouble her mother, she was told she would receive by quarterly payments, the generous allowance of one hundred per annum. A girl, the youngest daughter of her old nurse, was to be her only female domestic, and she had a stout boy to take care of the cow and the garden.

With this bare support, while her children were young, Mrs. Lucius endeavoured to be contented; but, when her eldest son had reached his tenth birthday, she thought it high time that he should have better instruction than she could either give or procure for him. Knowing the obligation she had formerly been under to Mr. Croker, who, to do him justice, did not neglect to pay her

income regularly, as well as her servants' wages, she wrote to ask that gentleman to procure her an interview with her mother, stating, at the same time, why she wished for it: he answered her letter civilly, and promised to do all in his power.

A sort of correspondence through the medium of the lawyer was commenced, and Mrs. Normanburn proposed at last so far to restore her daughter to favour, as to allow her to live with her, and to leave the estate to her eldest son, and provide for the other children, on condition that Mrs. Lucius would bind herself, under the penalty of forfeiting all the aforesaid advantages, never to see her children on any occasion, or under any pretence, during her (Mrs. Normanburn's) life.

These were hard conditions to so affectionate a parent as Mabella, and she could not at first persuade herself to comply with them; but she had learnt in the

school of adversity to make sacrifices, and at last consented to send her children to school, and to go to her unnatural mother. Not daring, however, to trust the caprice and the cruelty of this inexorable parent, she stipulated, that Purlbeck cottage, and its small domain, should be made over to her, together with such a sum of money in the funds, as would, in case of a rupture, enable her to support her children. The utmost she could obtain was the cottage, and three thousand pounds stock, which having secured, she sent her dear boys to school, and left her girls under the care of Molly Beale, who promised to come regularly once a week, to tell her mistress how the dear angels were.

CHAP. IV.

The Story continued.—More Proofs of maternal Solicitude, with a Choice of an Heir, and the Consequences of Visits from Heirs.—The Effects of Despair; and another Peep at our Heroine.—A Glimpse of a Change for the better.

Perhaps, during no period of Mrs. Lucius Normanburn's life, had she been so truly wretched, as during the sixteen years that she lived with her mother, who in general treated her with the most galling contempt. In that time her eldest son had received a very indifferent education, and married a farmer's daughter near York, whose chief recommendation was her beauty, and who had only about eight hundred pounds to her fortune. But for this Mr. Normanburn cared not! his grandmother was an old woman, she could

not live for ever, and she had promised him the estate.

Her second son, Lucius, was but a lieutenant in the army; her eldest daughter had married a young naval officer, and resided at a distant sea-port, and the younger, to the great disgrace of her family, had quitted her sister's house, and married a man, who, it was reported had already a wife, and whom she accompanied to America.

In this situation of her affairs, Mrs. Lucius earnestly wished to see her son John, previously to making her own will, and she ventured for once to infringe the bounds prescribed her, hoping and believing that it could not possibly reach her mother's ears. She had an interview with the young man, who lived in Purlbeck Cottage; she embraced his wife, a very amiable creature, and she blessed their little boy, who was the image of her own ever beloved husband. She then arranged her affairs, giving the cottage and one

thousand pounds to her son, and dividing what money she was besides possessed of among her other children. Having made this arrangement, she executed her will, and placed it in her son's hands.

Two or three years again slipped away! her mother still lived, and no hints were given of executing her will according to promise: the subject was never even alluded to, though the old lady knew that it was in consequence of her own strongly expressed wish, that her eldest grandson had been brought up without a profession, and had vegetated in a state of almost perfect inactivity.

The anxiety of Mrs. Lucius kept pace with the years, and growing infirmities of her mother, and day after day, she hoped in vain that the old lady might settle her affairs. Her uneasiness had a visibly bad effect on her own health; she was filled with a presentiment of evil, and suffered an extraordinary depression of spirits. Such was her situation, when her

mother one morning sent for her into her dressing-room, and with the same bitter unrelenting air that she had exhibited on the occasion of reading the will, she told her that she knew she had had the audacity to see her son. "Don't dare to deny it, Mrs. Lucius," continued she, "for a denial would come too late. I am about to settle my affairs, and if you had adhered to your part of our agreement I should have kept mine. You may now prepare to quit this house for ever, and I shall seek an heir to the Normanburn estate."

Neither, tears, entreaties, prayers, nor reproaches could move this heart of adamant; she actually ordered her carriage, while her daughter was in a fainting fit, and went forth in search of an heir. To the honour of human nature let it be recorded, that out of four families to whom she offered the Normanburn property, three refused it with indignation, and urged her to give it to her daughter and

her children; the fourth, however, was not so scrupulous, but agreed to all the conditions she prescribed, and she wrote off immediately to York for a solicitor to make her will; not choosing, for some reason or other, to employ Mr. Croker, who was now both old and wealthy. The person she chose for his successor was called Lightfoot: he was the son of an apothecary, who had practised with such good success in the legacy department, that he was enabled to give over business, and to purchase an estate in the neighbourhood of Normanburn.. This son, now a mere child, seemed no less fortunate in this way than the old gentleman had been, and in less than ten days the will was executed, and he received an invitation, along with his father, to stay a short time with the generous testatrix.

Whether it is that people receive an intimation from their attendant genius, when their career is nearly run, or whether their time may not even be shortened by

the making a will, especially when they invite the expecting heir to become their inmate, we know not! and, indeed, it would be presumptuous in us to determine so delicate a question: but so it was, that on the tenth day after Mr. Lightfoot's arrival Mrs. Normanburn was suddenly taken ill, and expired before night: and, as she was considered an ailing woman, nobody was surprised at this catastrophe. Mr. Lightfoot took possession of the fine property and magnificent house, and Mrs. Lucius Normanburn remained shut up in Purlbeck Cottage a prey to the most corroding grief.

In this melancholy situation, she had not only her own sorrows and disappointments to agitate and destroy her, but those of her son, and her daughter-in-law. Though Mr. Normanburn had never received any personal kindness from his grandmother, never entered the gates of that domain, of which he might one day be possessor, yet he had been told, from

the time that he went to school, that he would certainly be heir to Normanburn, and had cherished all that pride of ancestry, which those, who can reckon their progenitors for a few generations back, feel so strongly, and enjoy so exquisitely. Mr. Normanburn had not only *hoped*, he had been *certain* that the death of his grandmother would insure the future prosperity and happiness of his family, he had never dreamt of a disappointment, and the stroke now fell upon him with a weight, that he was ill fitted, either by nature or education to bear. Extremely irritable, and easily depressed, his first emotion, when his wretched mother brought the intelligence of the old lady's determination, was a paroxysm of rage and despair, that threatened to deprive him of his senses: more than once he attempted his own life, and he incessantly menaced that of his iniquitous relative. When this abated, he sunk into a state of languor and depression, which seemed

to forbode a wretched termination of a wretched existence; and he evinced so decided a dislike to the sight of any relative, that for several weeks Molly Beale was the only person who entered his room.

An event that at any other time would have overwhelmed him with affliction, now had rather a salutary effect; this was the death of his little boy, a most engaging child, who fell a martyr to the measles. This changed the current of his grief, and he had soon after the misfortune to lose both his wife and mother. He now found himself a widower with blasted hopes, a narrow income, and an infant daughter, and yielding to the impulse of the moment, he shut himself up from all intercourse with the world, and leaving his child to the care of his old servant Molly, employed his time chiefly in reading such books as his scanty library was furnished with.

When the little Mabella grew strong

enough to accompany him in his usual walk, through a wooded glen behind the orchard, which led to a romantic scene diversified with every beauty that part of our island is so rich in, he took a sort of melancholy pleasure in seeing her run before him, and hearing her talk to the birds and animals that came in her way. Indeed the dialogues she held with these chance companions were sometimes very amusing, and Mabella contrived to supply words for both parties with a volubility that would not have disgraced a professed gossip. As she increased in strength and activity, she became curious to see what lay beyond that point, where her father invariably stopped, and particularly desirous to ascend the beautiful mountain that bounded her to the right. She did not ask her papa, for she had been told that she must never ask him any questions; but she inquired of Molly, why papa did not run up the hill? "Nay, honey! that's what I moan't tell, I reck-

on!" said Molly: "but, I warn'd it, master'll never lug up 't hill."

"Why, Molly?" asked Mabella, "I saw a hare run up." "Aye, aye, honey," said Molly, "bud may be 't hare could not see 'tauld hoose!"

Something else at that moment diverting Mabella's attention, she asked no more questions; but the next walk she took, she no sooner found herself at the foot of the hill, than recollecting *'tauld hoose*, she began to make her way through the long shoots of the brambles, that intercepted the path. Her father did not observe her, and was startled from a very melancholy reverie by hearing her exclaim, "come up, papa! do come up, papa! oh! how pretty! come! do come, papa!"

Mr. Normanburn found by her voice that she was still proceeding, and partly moved by alarm for her, and partly by anger, he called to her to return in a voice that made the mountain ring, and

and brought the poor terrified child back in a very short space of time. After this, Mabella was only allowed to accompany her father on the express condition, that she should never, on any occasion, exceed her limits, and though her curiosity was considerably whetted by this prohibition, she did not dare think of gratifying it.

She was an active, gentle, happy-dispositioned child, and though she could neither read nor write, (for her friend Molly, who had the sole care of her, was not happy enough to possess those accomplishments); she acquired a great deal of useful knowledge, and became very handy, and expert, both in the house and the garden; had her strength permitted her, she could have made the bread, dumplings, puddings and pies, for the family; she learned by degrees all that her instructress could teach her, and she never forgot any thing. Her reward for being useful before dinner, was to sew,

or learn to mark, after; and the latter art was gained from an old sampler of her mother's. But, though she could mark the letters in her own way, she could not learn their names, there being only five or six that Molly was acquainted with: these were great A, I, round O, and Izzard: with *and parsé and*, at the end; and this knowledge, confined as it was, afforded her great pleasure. She would have asked her papa to tell her the rest; but by this time he was almost inaccessible to her, and so morose in his manner, that she grew much afraid of him.

Mabella had completed her tenth year, and was really become an excellent assistant to Mrs. Beale, when a circumstance happened, that made a considerable change in her situation. This was the death of Lieutenant Glassington, who left his wife a very bare provision, and the return to England of her uncle Lucius, with an eye and a leg less, than he carried out with him. Mrs. Glassing-

ton and her brother proposed to reside with Mr. Normanburn, paying him such a sum for their board, as their narrow means would admit of; and Mr. Normanburn, who, at times, felt some self-reproach for the neglect Mabella suffered, agreed to their proposal, on condition, that they should never intrude on his privacy, or endeavour to induce him to join their society. These conditions being accepted, preparations were made for their reception; and they, retiring from a world where they had experienced little else but disappointment and sorrow, soon arrived at Purlbeck Cottage, to pass the remainder of their lives in each other's society.

CHAP. V.

A Peep at a Brother and Sister in a Postchaise.—Oratory.—A best Bonnet.—Opinions on second Marriages; and an Arrival at Purlbeck.

PERHAPS (for we do not venture to speak with certainty, seeing there are so many singular combinations in the world) perhaps no two people more dissimilar could well be shut up together in one postchaise, than Captain Lucius Normanburn and his sister; and during the eight miles that they travelled tête-à-tête, both displayed characteristic traits that might have struck, even a superficial observer.

"I wish we were at the end of our journey, brother," cried Mrs. Glassington, in an impatient tone: "I am shaken to death, and almost melted, and my complexion is as dark as my gloves! Foh!

my tongue is covered with dust! am not I a horrid fright?"

"Yes, my dear!" replied the Captain, placing his wooden leg upon a band-box, that contained her best bonnet.

Mrs. Glassington had been so many years a stranger to her brother's ways, that she had almost forgotten them; and when he answered, "Yes, my dear!" she blushed deeply enough to be visible through the dust she complained of, and, in a sort of half whine, said, "Yes?—how odd!"

"So I have been thinking, Jenny," replied the Captain, "a very odd manœuvre it is, as any I ever witnessed. I can hardly believe it!"

"Believe what, Lucius?" asked the sister, in a tone between mortification and tenderness.

"What?" said the Captain, "Why, that my last march should be to the cottage we were drilled in, and my last quarters so near my first. John used to

have a good heart, though he rather looked down on me, as of inferior rank! I hope he'll behave like a brother—I don't beg any thing of him—I only want peace and quiet, things I have never enjoyed since my boyish days."

"We shall have peace enough, brother, in all conscience," replied the sister, with a sigh, "more, I fear, than is conducive to happiness. If I could have lived at Plymouth, I promise you I should not have peeped again at Yorkshire! but cheapness is now a great object, and a few pounds saved the next year or two may enable me to appear in the neighbourhood, as suits my rank. If my grandmother had been any thing but a tyrannical wretch"——

"D—n her to the lowest pit of h—ll!" interrupted the Captain with a furious air, that made his sister tremble, and at the same time dashing his wooden supporter through the lid of the band-box; "Those are the fittest quarters for such a native

devil's dam, that could torment her own daughter, and ruin her family, when she was forced to go begging for an heir, and at last took a bladder-squeezing commander of clyster pipes! a fellow, that never faced an enemy boldly, but was always in the rear! a villain! a scoundrel! an eater of the bread of the orphan! D—n the rascal, if ever I meet him I'll wring the soul out of his dastard body! I'll kick him to h—ll!" so saying, he kicked with what had been his right leg, and dislodged the widow's bonnet, that had travelled in such perfect safety all the way from Devonshire.

The effect of this sudden burst of oratory, warm from the heart, was as great as heart could desire; the post-boy stopped his horses, or perhaps the animals might themselves halt! this we have not been able to determine: Mrs. Glassington trembled with fear, and wept with grief, at the fate of her bonnet; and the Captain himself fell back in his seat, gasp-

ing as if he had been combating an enemy, and his only eye appeared ready to start from its socket. A few minutes, however, seemed to restore the parties to composure, and the post-boy had just obeyed the order to drive on, when they met a travelling chaise and four, and, as the road was in that part narrow, and inconvenient, the carriages passed slowly, so that those, who occupied them, had an opportunity of observing each other. Of this opportunity the Captain was still too much agitated to avail himself, but Mrs. Glassington thrust her head forward, and encountered the look of a gentleman, who gnashed his teeth, when he saw her, and exclaimed, "Monster!" with an emphasis, that roused even the Captain.

"What could the man mean, Jenny?" said he, in his usual gentle manner, "why did he call you monster?"

"You are very provoking, brother," returned Mrs. Glassington: "I suppose

you have frightened and distressed me so, till I look frightful! I don't wonder at it!"

"I am sorry, my dear Jenny, to have hurt you!" said the Captain, taking her hand, "but the mention of that woman, that devil! is like pouring boiling lead through my veins, and I fear, some day or other, I shall act some fatal extravagance when I think of her. As to the poor bonnet," continued he, "it is in a sad condition to be sure! but it is but the fate of war! all who lie in the route of an army suffer, whether friends or foes; indeed, it makes but little difference, which. But we may as well procure intelligence, and learn who this monster gentleman is! we should know our neighbours."

In reply to the Captain's question, the boy answered that "it was Squire Lightfoot, as did live in Normanburn House, and, he supposed, he was up o't Grand Jury, and was going right for York, to't size."

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The Captain was seized with a shivering fit, and his whole frame shook with agony; it was some time before he could speak, and, when he did, it was to lament that they had such ill luck on their first arrival, as to meet their deadliest foe, and in a situation where he could not be annoyed. Mrs. Glassington answered only by her tears and sighs, and they rode on for some time in silence. This Mrs. Glassington at length interrupted. "I wonder what kind of a child Mabella is! Do you think she is pretty?" asked she.

"Very likely!" replied the Captain.

"I hope so, I'm sure," continued his sister, "for her face must be her fortune, and *I* shall take care to have her introduced as Mabella Normanburn ought to be. It is lucky enough for the poor child, that we are to become her guardians! John was always easy, and, I dare say, now he is a disappointed man, he has very little society!"

"None at all, I should fancy," said

the Captain: "indeed, with his income, I don't see how he can form any junction with the country gentlemen of his own rank, and he would not, of course, mess with a man of a lower rank."

"He would be to blame, if he did," said Mrs. Glassington; "we have nothing left us, but our blood, and that we must preserve. It is a pity John never married again, he might have done better the second time, than he did the first. Once for fancy is very well! but it's foolish work! The second time should be for rank or gold."

"When you marry again, my dear Jenny, I shall remember your present opinion!" replied the Captain with a melancholy smile: "I fancy you will have it all to yourself, for John most likely will march no more under the command of Hymen, and as to me—I am but the wreck of a man! One eye, and one leg, rheumatism, low spirits, and half-pay, are not tempting baits for ladies."

Our travellers had, by this time, arrived at a turn in the road, that presented them with a view of Purlbeck Cottage, the village beyond it, and Normanburn House in the distance: they both remained silent, a moment, and then both overwhelmed with painful recollections, and the melancholy presentiment, that this would be their last retreat, burst into tears. As they approached the cottage, however, they repressed their emotions, and when the chaise stopped at the gate, they found their brother, the image of melancholy, their old friend, Molly, with her little charge, and the rest of the household, consisting of Blog the lad, the cat, and the dog, ready to receive them. We forbear to give the particulars of their first interview; suffice it to say, that, by the end of the week, each had naturally placed him or herself in the proper situation: Mrs. Glassington had commenced housekeeper, the Captain had established himself in the little back room, where he

could smoke his pipe when agreeable, and he had made, besides, so much progress in the affection of his niece, as to induce her, spite of her dread of his wooden leg, to be very constantly with him; as to Mr. Normanburn, he had resumed his usual custom of living almost entirely in the room he dignified with the name of his study.

CHAP. VI.

Our Heroine's literary Attainments.—Her Progress in Languages.—Account of the Works she read.—Hints for forming Connexions in the World, with the happy Consequences of a Schoolboy's trick, and an Introduction to the Reverend Tobit Bleathead, and other interesting Personages.

Mrs. Glassington had naturally enough concluded, that, as her brother had no other relative but his daughter, he had dedicated some portion of his day to teaching her to read; and, though no reading woman herself, she was somewhat shocked, when presenting Mabella with a little book, she had brought her, she found the child could not read it.

"Not read it, child?" cried she, "why, have not you learnt your letters yet?"

"Yes, Ma'am," replied Mabella, "Molly teached me: she teached me to make great A, little i, round o, and crooked izzard, with andparséand."

"And what is andparséand, my little pigeon?" asked the Captain, "that goes beyond my learning."

"Aye?" cried Mabella, "why you know it's all crooked, like a cow-tye! I'll shew you, when Blog goes to milking."

"What shocking ignorance!" exclaimed Mrs. Glassington: "so this poor little creature has not an idea of any sort."

After considering a few moments, Mabella said, "What is an idea, aunt?"

"Lord, child, what an odd question!" cried the aunt; "why, an idea is—a sort of a thought."

"And what is a thought, aunt?" asked Mabella. "Why, an idea, child, to be sure! don't be troublesome!" answered Mrs. Glassington, rather impatiently.

"I think, Jenny," said the Captain,

"an idea is as inexplicable to you, as andparséand is to me; and, perhaps, the child may know as much of one as of the other. Come hither, pigeon! you must learn to read, that you may read pretty stories! I remember Tom Thumb, to this day."

"I know him!" cried Mabella, "he comes every week to shave papa."

This information amused her uncle and aunt, and they found, on conversing with her, that, though she could not read, she had some information, and that Mrs. Beale had rendered her perfect mistress of the stories of "Little Red Riding Hood," "Sleeping Beauty," "The Enchanted Ring," with many others of the same kind; to which she had added various anecdotes of ghosts, witches, and apparitions; so that Mabella had a sort of learning, that supplied her little active soul with ample matter for speculation.

The three years that followed this pe-

riod were very important years to Mabella, as it was during that time she learned to read, write, and cypher, from her kind uncle, who, being incapacitated by his lameness from taking much exercise, was glad to have so pleasing an occupation within doors. In addition to what we have mentioned, the Captain made an effort to teach her something of the French language, but, as he himself had never known more of it than sufficed to ask for what he wanted in his various quarters, he found all his attempts abortive, and the sum total that Mabella acquired from him was, to salute him in the morning, with "Bon jour, mon cher oncle," and in the evening with "Bon soir."

Among the books that had belonged to his father, the Captain found many in Latin, and Greek; but the English authors, that gentleman was possessed of, had been chiefly divided between Mrs.

Glassington and her sister, and were now lost to the family for ever! Mrs Glassington declared she never knew how. What remained, however, were brought down from the shelf in the garret, and dusted, for the use of Miss Normanburn, and, in reading them aloud to her uncle, whose sight was not strong, she attained to a very good enunciation, and in part corrected her provincial accent and pronunciation, which exceedingly hurt the delicacy of her uncle's ear.

As our readers may be curious to know what authors Miss Normanburn read, and to compare the list with that furnished to their own children by the tutors and governesses, under whom they are pursuing their studies, we have been at some trouble, to ascertain their titles, and we here give them, as furnished by the most authentic testimony, to the reader. They are arranged, as nearly as possible, in the order in which they were first read.

Esop's Fables,
Pleasing Instructor,
300 Animals,
} all imperfect.

Abridgment of History of England, with cuts.

Gulliver's Travels.

Anson's Voyage.

Odd volume of Pope's Letters.

————————Miscellanies, including Chevy Chase.

————————Spectator.

————————Newgate Calendar.

These, with Mother Bunch's Fairy Tales, Mabella devoured, rather than read; and, when she had particularly pleased her uncle, or when he wished for a gratification himself, he produced, from his own store of books, a volume of Shakspeare, (he had but one) or of Don Quixote, or of the Arabian Nights. During the time that Mabella was improving from the study of these works, (and they rendered her a very amusing companion)

a considerable change took place in the habits of the family, and particularly of Mr. Normanburn, who by degrees relaxed from his severity, and instead of remaining entirely excluded from his fellow beings, occasionally admitted, not only his own family, but a neighbour or two, to sit an hour with him. For this salutary change he certainly was indebted to his sister, who having been used to the gossip of a populous town, felt it utterly impossible lo live in the perfect seclusion practised at Purlbeck.

When Mrs. Glassington arrived at the cottage, she imagined that the neighbouring families, who had known and visited her mother and grandmother, would, both from respect for the family, and pity for their unmerited misfortunes, make a point of calling upon her, invite her to their houses, and offer her the use of their carriages; and she determined, since fortune had not blest her with a carriage of her own, to do them the fa-

vour to accept their civility. Not doubting that all this would happen exactly as she had supposed, she resolved not to lose any opportunity of mixing with the world, or forming a prudent establishment for herself, and her niece; and she did not imagine her brother could be mad enough to throw any obstacles in the way of her scheme. Doubtless, the scheme was a good, a prudent, a delicious scheme; and, could Mrs. Glassington have inspired the neighbourhood with the resolution of performing their part of it, all the rest would have followed, of course: but it so happened that nobody thought of calling on the widow of Lieutenant Glassington, and the only mention made of her in that circle, to which she belonged, and whose ornament she had intended to become, was, a wonder that she should like to come down again so near Normanburn House.

Being thus neglected by *the families*, as they were called, Mrs. Glassington,

who had no resources in herself, turned her eyes towards the inhabitants of Burnthwaite; and, ordering Blog to put the side saddle on the poney, she set out one morning to reconnoitre, and view the ground. Mabella accompanied her, and, after a journey, during which they rode and walked by turns, they arrived at the general morning rendezvous of the Burnthwaiters, the shop of Jobson Simpson.

At the moment that our two ladies crossed the green to the shop door, the boys from the school of the Rev. Tobit Bleathead were sallying forth from their morning's labour, to the number of five and twenty; and so various and so tattered was their costume, so loud their shouts, and so menacing their movements, that Mrs. Glassington thought some prison must have sent forth its refuse of juvenile offenders. She and the galloway were equally terrified! which being observed by an urchin, armed with a huge

pointed stick, he maliciously raised the said stick, and applying it to the posteriors of the unfortunate galloway, caused it to start so suddenly, that if Mrs. Glassington had been any thing but a Yorkshire woman, she would, indubitably, have been unhorsed: as it was, she kept her seat, and would have reached Mr. Simpson's door in safety, had not another lad torn up a bunch of butcher's broom, and thrust it, without fear of the heels, under the beast's tail.

Had we the pen of one of those ingenious persons, who describe in our daily prints and play bills, the astonishing and rapturous feats performed by animals of two and four legs in our royal theatres; or did we understand the technical terms used by professors in describing the acts of the disciples of Terpsichore, we, too, would attempt to produce the *electrifying*, *ravishing*, and *burning* of our readers, by the description of those wonderful *coupés*, and *what nots*, per-

formed by Dick the galloway, on the village green! but, for want of ability, we forbear; suffice it to say, that, after various gambols (all highly applauded by the juvenile enemy), Dick was happily relieved from the lancets behind, and the burden upon him, at one and the same time; and Mrs. Glassington being raised from the ground by Jobson Simpson, and the Rev. Tobit Bleathead, was conducted, half dead with vexation, into the shop of the former. There had poor Mabella taken shelter, and there, after a violent hysteric, Mrs. Glassington was beginning to ascertain whether she had any limbs broken or not, when the arrival of a stranger seemed to give universal satisfaction, and Jobson exclaimed, "I'll be hang'd, if there isn't Doctor Stunt coming! I could knaw 't' yaud, a mile off!"

The Rev. Mr. Bleathead raised his head, for ever adorned with a huge bushy wig, and a pair of spectacles, and sur-

veying the figure that was seen crossing the village green, said in a slow pompous tone (which he had intended to substitute for the Yorkshire recitative), "Aye! so it is! the *vary* man, to the best of my belief, and always making allowance for human *imperfaction!* *Gad* willing! he may restore this good gentlewoman."

By this time, the Doctor, mounted on his yaud (*Anglicè*, Galloway), had reached the door, unmolested by the school boys, who, fearing a reckoning, had departed another way; but we will describe Doctor Stunt in a new chapter.

CHAP. VII.

Doctor Stunt at full Length.—A curious and learned Dissertation on falling, and broken Limbs.—The great Politeness of the Reverend Mr. Bleathead, and the no less great Magnanimity of Mrs. Glassington.—Jacky Walker.—Memoirs of Jacky Walker, with how he escaped being a Bishop.

DOCTOR Stunt was a man of about fifty years of age, five feet high, with short thighs, thick legs, and a huge belly, but ill covered by his waistcoat, which, like his breeches, being somewhat of the shortest, gave occasion to his shirt to puff out in a most surprising manner; and, as his linen was not always of the cleanest, the ladies of his acquaintance suspected, that he used this portion of it to wipe his fingers on, after employing them in his professional duties. Be this

as it may, the Doctor was, beyond all doubt, a very extraordinary figure, and his face was worthy of the person it appertained to. It was broad, flat, wide mouthed, and of a fiery red; adorned with two eyes of amazing dimensions, overhung by two grey, bushy eye brows. All the upper part of his head was bald, but well greased and powdered; and the few hairs that remained behind were united, and tied together by a black ribbon.

Let the weather be what it would (except in the very depth of winter), his extraordinary head was for ever naked, and exposed, the huge cocked hat, that should have covered it, being carried in the right hand of its owner, while the left guided his yaud. The Doctor himself was won't to say (and it was almost his only jest), that he never "*took off his hat* to any man," and when he sported this bon mot to Parson Bleathead, that worthy man invariably replied, "Na!

na! yow hold it ready for all." This important son of Esculapius, having dismounted with some difficulty, approached Mrs. Glassington with a very low bow, and inquired, what *ailed* her? To which she replied, that her horse had thrown her.

"A bad job, that!" said the man of medicine; "what, you haven't *flactured* a buone?"

"It seems nat, Dactar," said Mr. Bleathead, "it seems nat! that is, as far as human imparfaction may venture to assart; Gad willing! the gentlewoman may recaver."

"Recover?" answered Stunt, "Aye, to be sure, if she'd flactured every buone in her skin. Nowt can cap me! I doun't care a d—n for your cumpounds, your double flactures! nut I! I a' been at t' hospital at Yerk. Bud, cum, Mistress! may be it wouldn't be amiss to wopen a vein, or so, it ull do you a vast o' good!"

This last proposal being the most rational part of his discourse, Mrs. Glas-

sington did not oppose it, and, retiring to Mrs. Simpson's parlour, she was there blooded, to the great terror of Mabella, who wept bitterly, and being afterwards recruited with a glass of cowslip wine, she paid Doctor Stunt his fee, for which he bowed as low as his corpulency would let him, and then returned to the shop to make a purchase, by way of remunerating Mr. Simpson for his trouble, and his cowslip wine. While she was there, the Rev. Tobit Bleathead, who had left the house, returned, and, bowing low, told her—but he shall speak himself. "Madam," said he, "I have discavered, that the misfartin, that has befallen you, whereby you mought, bat for the marcy of Gad, have broken your limbs; I have descavered, Madam, that, as I suspacted, the aforesaid misfartin was caused, or occasioned, or produced, by the mischievous sinfulness of one of the young archins under my care. I am come to apalagize to you, Madam, and to assure you, that

as fur as I can answer, and always mak-ing allowance for human imperfaction, I will engage, as soon as, Gad willing! I shall have detacted the offender, he shall receive the reward and partion of the wicked! He shall receive farty stripes, save one, which, being the true, holy, and scriptural scourging, is, I humbly canceive, the only lawful one, and is, in truth, the greatest panishment, I ever favor any of my young schalars with bestawing."

"The boy deserves punishment," said Mrs. Glassington, yielding to her wrath-ful sensations, "and severely too! but, (being a little ashamed of shewing how angry she was) but, Sir! I must beg you, this time, to overlook his fault—I am not much worse! My brother, Mr. Normanburn, Sir, will be happy to thank you for the attention you have shewn me." This kind of invitation to call at Purlbeck Cottage, whose owner had never condescended to speak to Parson

Bleathead, that worthy gentleman considered as a surprising honour, and he assured the lady who gave it, that Mrs. Bleathead and himself would, "Gad willing!" soon inquire after her state.

And now Mrs. Glassington was again about to mount her galloway, when she was suddenly seized with fear, and declared, that she did not dare ride home with nobody but her niece to accompany her, as she might meet the young gentlemen on the road: to this the parson replied, that she had not need run such a risk, and that he bitterly regretted not being able to attend her, but he proposed, that Jacky Walker should go with her, if he could be found: "a desirable companion, guard, or escart, Madam," said he, "and the more espacially, as a sup of beer will satisfy him for his toil."

Mrs. Glassington again sat down, till Jacky Walker could be found, which was not immediately, for he was sleeping comfortably in Jobson Simpson's stable;

but, at last, he made his appearance, rubbing his eyes, and crying, "Aye, bairn! aye!" and the ladies were soon on their way back to the cottage, escorted by the gallant Walker, armed with a good crabstick.

While they pursue their journey thither, which they did without molestation, we shall give some account of Jacky Walker, a person as well known in the part of the country he inhabited, as Squire Lightfoot himself.

Jacky Walker, or Fond Jacky, as he was commonly called, was one of a numerous family of children, who, to the great misfortune of their parents, did not each bring a silver spoon in his mouth.

By great toil, and some help from the parish, Jacky Walker, senior, contrived to exist, and by degrees his other children got off his hands, and, some way or other, provided for themselves. But the subject of our present notice, though hale and strong in limb, remained a burden

on his father, on account of the lamentable deficiency in his understanding, which was so great, that he could not earn a penny by going an errand, or get half a day's work from any farmer in the village, as they never could, by any means, make him understand that he was to continue the employment they set him about.

Old Walker was very much pitied for having so helpless a child, and received, in consequence, many little indulgences, and helps, from those who had more of the gifts of fortune, till, indeed, he became almost an object of envy to his equals: the then rector of the parish, who was a great philanthropist, and a sound divine, though he sometimes indulged in whimsical speculations, proposed to take the boy, now fourteen or more, into his house, and study his case; suspecting, as he said, that there was more of genius than folly in Jacky's eccentricities! should it prove so, he

promised to teach him Latin and Greek, fit him for holy orders, and, when he had done, give him a title.

This benevolent and enlightened scheme would have succeeded to admiration, had the good rector been able to teach Jacky his letters, or to read a verse in the Psalms, as, then, he might have hoped for some further fruit from his labours; but that youth had too much genius to have any application, and, after a residence of two months in the rector's kitchen, during which two months he had learnt nothing but how to clean the knives, he was declared incurable, and unfit for the church.

We are not certain that Fond Jacky would ever have attained to any excellence in the art of knife polishing, but from a manœuvre of the cook, who would never allow him to taste food till he had cleaned his knife, and, whether it was that he contracted a fondness for the art, or that he had a genius for it, we cannot

determine; but so it was, that Jacky learnt to clean knives admirably, and before the expiration of his two months probation, he did all the work of that kind in the rector's family.

From the good report made of him in this respect, the butlers of some neighbouring families occasionally gave him a job, and a mug of ale, and Jacky continued to live in the world on a small parish allowance, and the alms of the benevolent; sometimes earning a few pence, by doing little odd jobs, such as bringing in firing, holding a horse at Mr. Simpson's door, or going home with children or ladies, who occasionally visited the village.

However dull were the intellects of Jacky Walker, he shewed that he was not void of that universal love of domineering over others, that renders every employment, which places others at our beck, agreeable, however disgusting in itself; and this he manifested by sitting,

on a Sunday, in the church porch, armed with a crabstick, and driving away the saucy urchins, who, regardless of their duty, were playing about the church-yard, instead of attending to the parson within. These reprobate rebels he pursued, and drove to a distance, brandishing his crabstick, and crying, "Aye, bairn! aye!" an exclamation that frequently chimed in with the responses made by the zealous, big-wigged clerk, within.

All these particularities in the character and acquirements of Fond Jacky, rendered him a favourite with the Burnthwaiters; and some of the more serious remarked, that he seemed to have a natural love for the church, and that it was a thousand pities that the rector had not given him a longer trial, just to see whether the kernel was not there, when the nut was well cracked. Then it was observed, too, that Jacky never would wear a hat! If one was given to him, he

invariably cut it in pieces, and supplied its place by a cap, made of cap-paper, in the shape of a sugar-loaf, not much unlike a mitre! but it was not Fond Jacky's good fortune to be a bishop. But to return to the ladies! this, however, we will do in a new chapter.

CHAP. VIII.

A singular Conversation, with the happy Result.

MRS. GLASSINGTON and her niece, escorted by Fond Jacky, arrived safely at Purlbeck Cottage; near which they were met by the captain, who was impatient for the return of his niece. There was something in the appearance of Jacky that amused Captain Normanburn, and he asked the poor fellow several questions respecting his situation, to which he received singular answers enough. This interrogatory did not please Mrs. Glassington, who, bursting into tears, said, she never saw any thing so unkind in her life! she had been almost killed, and her brother could stand talking to a poor ideot! To this Jacky exclaimed, "Aye, bairn! aye!" and the lady, turning to him, cried, "Get you

gone, you brute! how dare you speak so familiarly to a person of my family!" "Ha! ha! ha!" roared Jacky, laughing heartily, "rare family!" "I never heard such insolence in my life," continued Mrs. Glassington; "I could not have believed that any body would have dared to insult me thus! and here, where I was born too!"

"I want a drink!" said Jacky; "I'se vary dry!"

Mabella, on hearing this, ran in, and brought out a mug of beer, which she presented to her guide, who, after emptying the mug, looked at her, and said, "Bonny brat!" He was then preparing to depart, when Mrs. Glassington put a penny into his hand, and told him to learn to behave better, and not so familiarly to a gentlewoman; to which he answered, "Aye, bairn, aye! an auld woman! ugly, auld woman!" What might have followed so unfortunate a speech we cannot venture to conjecture,

had not Jacky, with great coolness, bestrid his crabstick, and, snatching a switch from the hedge, galloped off with great apparent satisfaction, and to the great delight of Mabella and the captain.

The party now retreated to the parlour, where the captain gave an attentive ear to the narrative of what had befallen his sister, and felt some pleasure at the recital of Mr. Bleathead's promise of calling on her: to own the truth, indeed, the poor captain was panting for a little society! he longed to have some communication with his fellow men, and anticipated no small delight from an intercourse so happily begun.

There was one difficulty, however, in the way of its continuance, which appeared almost insurmountable, and this was the decided antipathy Mr. Normanburn had to the sight of any stranger: an antipathy, which, from his very long seclusion from the world, it was little likely would be overcome. Mrs. Glas-

sington, however, undertook to manage her brother, and, by way of a beginning of operations, she went up stairs, and tapped at his door.

"Come in!" cried Mr. Normanburn, thinking that it was Mabella. Mrs. Glassington entered, and, throwing herself into a chair, put her handkerchief to her face, as if she had wept.

"What is the matter, Jenny?" asked Mr. Normanburn, in a languid tone; "has any misfortune befallen you?"

"Misfortune! to be sure there has!" returned she. "I have been thrown from my horse, and nearly killed. It's a mercy I'm here to tell it!"

"Thrown from your horse, and nearly killed!" said the brother, repeating her words, slowly, and as if pondering on them: then, after a short pause, he added, "I'm not surprized; I wonder you were not quite killed; I do, indeed; yes, indeed; killed outright!"

"Lord bless me! and why?" asked

Mrs. Glassington, all at once forgetting her grief and her tears.

To this question Mr. Normanburn returned no other immediate answer but a faint passing smile, and inquired at what hour the accident occurred? at the same time taking a manuscript book from his table-drawer.

"Grant me patience!" cried the lady, "what can that signify? Here, when I thought you would be so glad I was safe, and so anxious to know how it was, and how I escaped, and to hear who helped me, and all that; all you say is, about when it was: what can the *when* signify?"

"The *when* is to me the important thing!" said the gentleman, opening his book; "so recollect, as exactly as possible. I expected something would happen."

"What, you mean because the galloway is a little frisky, I suppose?" said Mrs. Glassington; "but that was not it,

I assure you! it was some insolent boys, that attacked the poor animal!—but luckily the Clergyman, a very nice, gentlemanly man, saved me!"

"At what o'clock?" asked Mr. Normanburn.

"Dear, how provoking! what can that signify?" answered the sister, in an angry tone.

"Tell me instantly!" cried Mr. Normanburn, in a voice of thunder, that terrified his sister, who replied, while trembling excessively, that she believed it was just twelve, for the boys were leaving school. This Mr. Normanburn entered in his journal, and, then, taking a little brass bell, not two inches in diameter, from his table, he rung it seven distinct times.

Mrs. Glassington began to think, and not without reason, that her brother was deranged; and starting from her chair, she was about to make a sudden retreat, when he bid her stay, in a manner that

insured obedience: she sat down again, trembling from head to foot, and awaited in silence, what he had to communicate. At length, after a long pause, he said; "Jenny—we have always been an unfortunate family! a very unfortunate family! and I have been for some years past, employed in discovering the cause of our ill luck."

"That does not need to employ much time, I should think," said Mrs. Glassington, "we need go no farther back than our good grandmother, Mrs. Wilhelmina Normanburn."

"She was not the cause, only the mean! but she has done her appointed task, and is now broiling in the hottest gulph of h—l!" replied Mr. Normanburn: "there, she lies!" at the same time, grinning with great satisfaction.

"I am sure, if I were a papist, I should not pay for praying her out again," said the lady, "she richly deserves the worst she can have, for her cruel usage of my

poor mother! I should like to be sure she was there, though!"

"*I* am sure of it! I *know* it is so!" returned Mr. Normanburn, "and you might know it too, if you had the proper faith, Jenny! But this evil star cannot domineer for ever! it must have a time and then—but you don't understand me, woman."

"No! I do not!" cried Mrs. Glassington, her fear returning forcibly upon her.

Mr. Normanburn was again silent some time, and then, as if recollecting himself, he said, "Did you say you were lamed, Jenny?"

This question again reassured Mrs. Glassington, and she returned to her original design of telling what had befallen her, and who had helped her; she continued thus: "I was telling you, John, if you would have heard me, that some boys frightened the galloway, and though I won't yield to any woman for a good seat on horseback, down I came!"

"Exactly at noon! when the sun was on the meridian?" said Mr. Normanburn.

"I suppose so," continued the lady. "Well! I do not venture to guess what would have become of me, if the shopkeeper, and the Reverend Tobit Bleathead, I think they call him, had not helped me!"

"Tobit? Is his name Tobit?" asked Mr. Normanburn; "that is a pious, a good, a lucky name! I never spoke to the man! what sort of a man is he, Jenny?"

This question seemed a good omen for Mrs. Glassington's wishes, and she replied:

"Quite a sensible gentlemanly man, I assure you! After the civility I received, I could not do less than tell who I was! for he got a surgeon to bleed me! one Stunt, I think! a very nice man! so, as I was saying, I told him who I was, and he seemed to say, he would call with his lady to inquire after me."

While Mrs. Glassington pronounced

these last words, she watched her brother's countenance with some anxiety, to see whether her communication was agreeable to him, and was pleased to observe no sign of anger: on the contrary, he seemed rather pleased with the intelligence; and stroking his beard of five days growth, two or three times, he asked whether the Reverend Tobit would call the next day?

"Very likely!" said Mrs. Glassington, "perhaps you will thank him for his attention to me?"

"That depends," answered Mr. Normanburn; "if my nerves are strong enough to bear any intercourse, I will certainly see him! if not—you and Lucius are enough!"

"I dare say, he will come to-morrow," said the lady, "and bring his wife too!"

"What day is to-morrow, Jenny?" asked the brother.

"Friday; yes, it is Friday! The next day butcher calls!" answered the lady.

"That's an unlucky day!" said the gentleman, and a bad day for me! my shaving day is Saturday! But, if he is right, that does not signify! Have you dined?"

"No! we are late to-day! and I fear the dumplings will be sad! Will you come down to day?" said the lady, rising to go down stairs. Mr. Normanburn answered, "No!" and Mrs. Glassington went to tell the Captain what had passed.

CHAP. IX.

Preparations for Company.—Picture of a cogitating Man.—Disappointment.—Effects of Expectation.

CAPTAIN LUCIUS hailed this behaviour of his brother as a happy omen, and already ventured to predict, that John would in a short time became fond of a little society; as, of course, he must be completely moped with living so entirely secluded from any communication with his fellow-men. The Captain, as is very natural, drew these conclusions from the view he took of his brother's reasons for relaxing from his wonted declaration in favour of solitude, and he attached not a little credit to himself for having greatly contributed to effect so happy an alteration, by the various hints he had thrown out, in the little intercourse he had had

with Mr. Normanburn, of the unpleasantness, danger, and even sinfulness, of shutting one's self up from the world. Happy in the self-gratulation this train of thought produced, he ate his dinner with particular glee and satisfaction; to which pleasing effect, probably, having waited a little longer than usual, might, in some degree, contribute.

As to Mrs. Glassington, her sensations were of a mixed nature! she was rejoiced, as she said, that the ice was broken; but, at the same time, there was something in the manner of her brother, that strongly impressed her with the idea that his head was a little affected. He had an odd look with his eyes! when in the least contradicted, his lips trembled with fury, and, once or twice, his attitude was very menacing. He talked so certainly about knowing that his grandmother was in h—ll! he talked of faith! of pious names! he seemed altogether so very odd, that Mrs. Glassington did not

know what to make of it. One thing, however, she determined upon, and this was, to have the parlour made as neat as possible, and her niece and herself dressed ready to receive their visitors.

That no time might be lost, her operations were begun, as soon as dinner was over; and by the bustle made in the cottage, a stranger would have imagined that a large party was expected. The carpet was taken up, the floor mopped over to *kill* the dust, the windows were cleaned, and Mabella rubbed the table and chairs; and this activity rendered it necessary for the family to eat their evening meal in the Captain's room, which, as the weather was hot, did not prove very pleasant. All inconveniences, however, were disregarded, or lost to the view, in the bright hope of receiving a visitor in that house, that had not, for so many years, opened its door to a stranger. The next morning, the ladies were up an hour earlier than usual, old Molly made

surprising efforts to expedite the business of the day, and, by eleven o'clock, the Captain and his two companions, rather smarter than usual, were assembled in the parlour. In order to pass away the time, the Captain proposed that Mabella should read a story; but Mrs. Glassington chattered so incessantly, that it was impossible.

They had been assembled about a quarter of an hour, when Mrs. Glassington recollected that there was nobody *fit* to go to the gate, as old Molly had not cleaned herself, and Blog was busy about his usual employments. This, to a woman who piqued herself on doing every thing properly, and keeping up the respectability of the family, was a most distressing circumstance, and she immediately held a Cabinet Council on the matter. After many expedients, all of which were introduced by the Captain with an *if!* as, "If we had a tiny lad, now, or a sort of hobble-ty-hoy!" or,

"If Blog had got done, and cleaned himself!" or, "If we could afford to have a more decent footman!" &c. &c.; all of which *Ifs* were very impracticable, and of no use in the world, but to amuse the speaker! after all these *Ifs*, the only thing that could be done, was determined upon, viz. that Mabella should, on hearing them ring at the gate, run out, as it were by chance, and open the gate; and her uncle, on seeing this happily performed, should approach, with his sister on his arm, and usher the visitors into Purlbeck Cottage.

No sooner was this important matter settled, than Mrs. Glassington, starting up, exclaimed, "Dear! I wonder whether my brother has shaved himself! Mab, my dear, was Papa shaved, when you were in his room?"

"Oh no!" answered Mabella, "he never shaves himself, Aunt, you know! his beard was as rough! as rough!"

"If that's the case," replied the aunt,

"depend upon it, he won't see Parson Bleathead! he can't, for shame! and I shall be so sorry! for now he has made up his mind to it, and, may be, he may change before they come again!"

"Very likely!" said the Captain; "and then this whole march will be to no earthly purpose! We may turn our faces round, and back to our old quarters! He *can* shave himself! I wish he would!"

"He shall!" cried Mrs. Glassington, "I'll run up and make him!" so saying, she rushed up stairs, and, darting into his room, was received with, "Holla! who's there?" not pronounced in the softest tone. "My dear John!" said she, advancing, but stopped short on perceiving her brother's situation, which was rather singular. He was standing, reading a book, at no great distance from the open window; on the back of a chair hung his coat, waistcoat, and a clean shirt; while

he himself had no other covering but his breeches and stockings. His hair, which was thin, and rather long, hung in great disorder about his face, indeed, it had not been combed since his beard was last mown; and his hands and face were so black for want of washing, that the contrast of the skin, on that part of his body that had been covered, was very striking.

Mrs. Glassington stood, as if petrified, for this was the first time she had seen her brother, while at his toilet. Whether it was fear or astonishment, that rendered her silent, we know not, but she remained perfectly so; and Mr. Normanburn, not being disturbed by her presence, continued to peruse his book, and, from time to time, he moved his lips, and rubbed his nose with his fingers. This did not encourage Mrs. Glassington to speak; she felt afraid of disturbing him, and wished herself safely down stairs

again. At last he shut up his book, and looking at his sister a little angrily, he said, "What do you want, Jenny?"

"Want?" answered she, "I—I want to know if you will see Parson Bleathead, brother?"

"Yes, my dear, I intend to see him—I shall be ready! I am dressing, you see!" replied her brother.

"Lord bless me!" exclaimed she.

"Are you ill, Jenny?" asked Mr. Normanburn, depositing his book upon a shelf, and taking down another.

"No, brother, I'm very well," said Mrs. Glassington, "but I expect the Bleatheads very soon; I suppose they will make it a morning call."

"Aye, probably!" said Mr. Normanburn.

"Do you know, John, I'm afraid, that you won't be ready to receive them," said his sister.

"Why not? Don't you see I'm get-

ting ready? Pray don't tease me, Jenny! I've enough to tease me," cried the brother, petulantly. This was enough for Mrs. Glassington; she left the room, fully convinced that her brother was nearly crazed, and bitterly lamenting, that misfortune should have had so fatal an effect on him. She communicated her thoughts to the Captain, who, after rubbing his chin some seconds, answered, that a few singularities did not constitute a madman.

The whole morning was passed in this and similar conversations, and the party sat down to dinner, without having had the satisfaction of seeing their new acquaintances approach.

Mabella, who had neglected all her usual occupations to have the extreme pleasure of receiving company, a pleasure which her aunt described as one of the greatest upon earth, was heartily weary, and worn out with the eagerness

and liveliness of her own sensations, and, having run up stairs to peep out of the window, and look over the wall, she was tempted to throw herself into an arm-chair, where she fell fast asleep.

CHAP. X.

The Arrival.—A country Parson and his Wife.—A cheap School.—Economy.

The reader will, perhaps, have some difficulty to give credit to the statement we have exhibited of that great anxiety that prevailed at Purlbeck, respecting the reception of a country curate and his wife; unless, indeed, the reader should, like Mrs. Glassington and her brother, have been completely shut up from all communion with the world, and like them, too, have been in the habit of finding their chief pleasure in such communion. They had both in a great measure, during many years, depended on others for amusement! they were now thrown on their own stock of ideas, or habits of employment, and we must allow, consider-

ing all things, that it was, as Captain Normanburn expressed it, but *so-so work.*

As at six o'clock the Bleatheads had not arrived, and as there was every appearance of a thunder storm, the captain and his sister abandoned all hopes of visitors that day, and the latter, changing her gown, prepared to make up by a little evening diligence for the time she had lost during the day. She was inquiring of Molly in rather a loud key, where Mabella was? when a ring at the gate announced the long expected Bleatheads, and as Molly and Blog were out of the way, and Mabella not to be found, the captain himself was obliged to act the part of porter, or gentleman usher, and conduct his bowing and curtseying visitors into the parlour; while Mrs. Glassington, who wished to impress them with an idea of her own gentility, ran up stairs to put on, once more, her best gown. She was soon properly arrayed, and, entering the room with great stateliness, paid her

compliments to the parson, expecting that he would, of course, immediately introduce her to his wife.

The Rev. Tobit Bleathead, however, either despised such ceremonies, or he had been so little accustomed to society, and its forms, as not to know that it would be expedient to do so; and the captain, fancying that Mrs. Bleathead felt awkward, (it was but a fancy) said, "Mrs. Bleathead, sister! I believe, Mrs. Bleathead, you know Mrs. Glassington's obligation to Mr. Bleathead!"

"Why, yes, Sir," returned Mrs. Bleathead in a loud shrill voice, and with a countenance that well depicted the character of the individual it belonged to, being composed of pretty equal portions of shrewishness and meanness, "t' parson told me he'd picked up t' misses, when she was chucked off o't galloway, and had nigh sounded! and, truly! she was like to sound! If I knew which young gentleman it was that clapped that prickle

bush under t' beast's tail, he shouldn't have no breakfast, this week! a pretty pickle, indeed! to meddle with a lady's galloway!"

"We should be sorry, Ma'am," said the good humoured captain, "that an accident attended with so little inconvenience to Mrs. Glassington, and which has procured us the pleasure of your acquaintance, should be so severely punished! Boys love mischief!"

"True, Captain Narmanbairn! vary true!" interrupted Mr. Bleathead: "of that I have, by the will of Gad, daily, and hourly, proof! It is nat to tell, it is nat to tell, what sins the arch enemy pats into their heads! Yow wad wander to hear the many, vary many camplaints I have of their tricks! but Gad's will be dan!"

"And yet," cried Mrs. Bleathead, "you can say, Parson, and with truth, too, that there's nobody at does more, nor you, for their souls, as well as bodies!

you can't think, Ma'am," (speaking to Mrs. Glassington) "what plague, and expense, and flogging, and flouting, there is among 'em! if I was as Parson Bleathead, I'd see 'em all at Jericho, wherever that country may be! before I'd work, and rive about, as he does! but all I say's nought! if he took my advice! but---proffered service---I know what! if he took my advice, he'd raise his terms! a noddy! and would have some'at handsome, as one need not scrape so! why, do you know, Ma'am, he has but sixteen pound a year with them boys, and that to pay all. We find them clothes, washing, meat, drink, and lodging; learning, books, slates, paper, pens, and ink, and every varsal thing in this world, for that beggarly sixteen pound a year! It's too bad, it is! he should rise it to twenty, he should! and if he'd a proper thought of what's due to his family, I've five children, Mrs. Glossumtan, he'd have twenty, if he had a bodle!"

When Mrs. Bleathead had concluded this oration, which she did, as soon as she was out of breath, she paused, and it was somewhat ludicrous to see the wonder and disappointment depicted on the countenances of the lady to whom it was addressed, and her brother: they looked, as if all their hopes were lost, and were at a loss for a reply, when the entrance of Mabella, who had been roused by the ring at the gate, and the subsequent bustle, happily relieved them.

She was rather shy, which was natural enough, considering the way in which she had lived; but she dropped a pretty graceful curtsey, and sat down on part of her uncle's chair.

"I fancy," said the parson, looking at her, "that yang laydy is the dater of Squire Narmanbairn! and a vary gad gurl she looks! vary gad! vary gad, indeed! vary pretty creetur, indeed! I've three! three gurls! all at school! at school at Leeds! oh! it's nat to tell what

hexcellent heddications they have at school! it's nat to tell! a school on my own plan! hexcellent plan! cambines the gad and the cheap! hexcellent!"

"Lord bless us!" cried Mrs. Bleathead, "to think how time runs on! why, I remember, as well as if it was but yesterday! I remember the rout there was all over 't country, when old madam died. The parson, there, knows nothing about it! he was not here; he hadn't a seen me then! we was married t' summer after! more's the pity!"

"Who was old madam, uncle?" asked Mabella, softly; a question, which her uncle, who began to feel the blood tingle in the toes he had lost some time before, declined to answer; but Mrs. Bleathead overhearing it, was kind enough to explain, and was glad of the opportunity, too.

"Why, my pretty dear, old Madam Normanburn was no other but your own great---yes, great grandmamma; and by

some trick or other, she contrived to snickle her husband."

So far had the intelligent, and consi-derate visitor proceeded, when Captain Lucius, starting up, exclaimed, rather than said, "Mabella, your papa wishes to see Mr. Bleathead; go, and tell him, that Mr. Bleathead is here." Mabella lingered, though her informant had stop-ped; but her uncle motioned to her to begone, and she left the room.

Mrs. Glassington, who remembered the fate of her best bonnet, and the paper box, was anxious to prevent so ticklish a subject from being pursued; and, in order to divert the attention of Mrs. Bleathead, she asked her, what she had paid for meat last week? A question that opened a wide field of discussion, and gave Mrs. Bleat-head an opportunity of boasting of her excellent management, and displaying much knowledge in the art of keeping a family of between thirty and forty persons

for almost nothing. Mrs. Glassington wondered, and so would our readers, if they had heard the detail; but we will let them behind the scenes, and when once they have seen the wires, their wonder will cease.

During eight years, and some of them not cheap years, Mr. Bleathead had taken young gentlemen into his family, on the terms mentioned above. As the salary he received for his cure was small, he depended chiefly upon the produce of his school, and when the number it contained was inconsiderable, it required such a genius, as that of Mrs. Bleathead, to make all things answer.

This, however, she effected by various ingenious devices, and feeding the boys chiefly on puddings, in which milk and eggs had so small a share, that you might have ventured to swear by all they contained, and not have been forsworn! To own the truth, flour of wheat gave place

to potatoe, and the latter root, as it were, reigned Lord Paramount at Parson Bleat-head's.

The only luxury the family enjoyed, was now and then a portion of pork or bacon, and, to supply the want of milk and bread, they had water-gruel, or porridge, without the milk and the treacle: as to their beverage, it was the pure stream! and, as the boys fetched it themselves, they might have as much as they pleased of it.

This state of things, however, was not long to be borne; and the young gentlemen finding their wits sharpened by hunger, as we have heard some other wits have been, took the rectifying of the matter into their own hands. At all possible times and seasons, they sallied forth in companies, and never failed to supply Mrs. Bleathead's table with either geese, chickens, ducks, rabbits, hares, partridges, pidgeons, &c. Nay, the neighbours had more than once hinted,

in rather a broad manner, that sundry butcher's shops, at a considerable distance from Burnthwaite, had contributed to the supply; that innocent lambs had suddenly disappeared, and left their fleeces behind them, and that corn was frequently missing from places, where it ought to have remained: nay, to confess the truth, these young depredators were the terror of the whole neighbourhood.

Mr. Bleathead clothed his scholars, as well as fed them, and about equally well.

As soon as a boy arrived at his house in a decent habit, and whole shoes and stockings, he was despoiled of them, and clothed in one of those suits, provided by Mr. Bleathead, that is, one left by a predecessor, as too bad to take home with him; and which was held together by divers patches, and stitches, put on, and in, by Mrs. Bleathead herself. His own clothes were marked with the name of another boy, whom they would fit, and

hung up on a peg to be ready against the friends of that boy came to see him; and, by this admirable contrivance, of which Mrs. Bleathead claimed the merit, the boys were all clothed, had a suit to appear in, and to carry home with them, which suit, not being the same they brought, was a proof positive, that they had had new clothes, and Mr. Bleathead was not a whit the poorer for it. So picturesque, however, was the appearance of these young gentlemen, that they were called in the neighbourhood, "BLEATHEAD'S FLAY-CROWS."

This illustrious divine was not at all behind his helpmate in the contrivances he had in his own department; but we have already said enough to give our readers a pretty correct idea of the principles and habits of Mr. Bleathead, and his industrious wife. This lady was in the middle of a dissertation, that fixed Mrs. Glassington's attention, and appa-

rently that of her brother, when the parlour door opened, and that passed, which the reader will find recorded in the second Book of this History.

END OF BOOK

BOOK II.



CHAP. I.

Mr. Normanburn makes his Appearance.—A Substitute for a Razor.—A first Interview.—Peenomeenas.—Their Effects.—A Retreat.—Kindred Minds.

THE parlour door at Purlbeck Cottage opened, as we said, and Mabella entered, followed by her papa, who had just concluded his toilet, (which from his great absence of mind, had lasted the whole day), when he was called by his daughter. Among his exertions, however, and they had been very fatiguing, that of shaving had not been included; and, though he was not very fastidious about his appearance, yet he could not help

being struck with the situation of his chin. Though Mr. Normanburn could not be ranked among men of genius, he was not without resources; and, partly moved by the idea that a long stiff beard of a week's growth was not like a gentleman, and partly by humanity for Mrs. Bleathead, who might probably be pregnant, and to whom a fright would, in that case, be a serious affair, and an infant with a strong rough beard (especially if a female) a real misfortune; moved, as we said, by these considerations, he contrived to hold a red silk handkerchief in such a position before his chin, as to conceal it; and, by putting the corner of the handkerchief between his lips, he prevented it from slipping down, and discovering what he wished to conceal.

In this situation of charitable mortification, and suffering much from nervous irritation, Mr. Normanburn entered, and fixed his eyes on Mr. Bleathead, with a very curious expression of inquiry. There

was a pause of at least two minutes, during which, Mrs. Glassington and her brother the captain, were almost sinking with mortification at the strangeness of Mr. Normanburn's appearance, and Mr. and Mrs. Bleathead were eyeing him with great eagerness and wonder.

Mr. Normanburn himself was the first to break silence; but the unfortunate corner of the handkerchief, which refused to stay where he had placed it, unless his lips were kept in somewhat close contact, rendered what he uttered so inarticulate, that Mr. Bleathead, to whom it was addressed, by no means comprehended any part of it; he made no other reply, but a formal bow.

Now it so happened, that Mr. Normanburn was a great believer in omens, as well as in many other superstitions, and he looked upon this failure as an unfavourable prognostic for the issue of his acquaintance with Mr. Bleathead; taking courage, however, from despair, he made

a second effort, but in pronouncing the word *sister*, making an attempt at clearness, he opened his lips somewhat too wide, and the malicious handkerchief, slipping down, discovered a chin, to which a shoe-brush would have been a trifle, in comparison.

The reader may easily imagine that this incident did not diminish the general consternation on any side, or tend to produce ease and comfort. Mrs. Glassington bit her lips almost through with vexation, the captain drew forth his pocket handkerchief, the parson uttered, "Gad Lard!" and his wife thrust her fingers into her mouth: as to Mr. Normanburn, he contrived to cover his chin again, with as much speed as possible, and again replaced the corner in his mouth. Mrs. Glassington now requested, that her visitors would not remain standing, a request that was complied with immediately, and Mr. Normanburn placed himself with his back to the light, so as to avoid, as

much as possible, the full glare, that came in at the window. Still silence prevailed, and Mrs. Glassington broke it by observing, that some heavy clouds were coming over, and foretold, she believed, a thunder-storm. "I'm sure, I hope not," replied Mrs. Bleathead, "for I got so heartily frightened t' last summer, no! 'twa'n't summer, 'twas just afore t'Yerk races, there! you remember't, Parson, I dares to say! you must know, Ma'am, t'were one Sunday, of all the good days i't' year, an my eldest lass was eight year old; so, what had we to do, but we must borrow Jobson Simpson's old mare, and set off, Darby and Joan fashion, to meet t' child at my sister Cobb's, where she was took to dinner. T' Parson, there, shut up shop, o't occasion of it; for, as he said, one prayer more or less wa'n't the thing, which was to make no differ. "Well! would you believe it, I'd a nigh sounded! and I was like to be nigh, for t' was as soltary a day, as if 't

were made o' purpose. However, as good luck would have it, I got to my sister Cobb's, which had like to have given us up, for she waited dinner while half past one, and a right good dinner we had, and a hexellent plumpudding! my Lord Judge, hisself, might a jumped at. Well, Mrs. Glossumtun, we filled ourselves wi' t' best i' t' land, and then jogged home again, as fast as t' auld mare could wag: but we had not got three mile, when there come on such a storm, as made us think t' last day was coming, or all t' witches i' Yerkshire was a merry-making."

"Good God! did you see any thing extraordinary, Madam?" asked Mr. Normanburn.

"See, Sir! aye, that we did! why, we stood under a tree for nigh an hour; I'm sure, I thought it nigh ten," replied the lady; "and we saw all the hollobaloo there was! such flashes of lightning, as would have frightened a sinner, and

thunder to suit; and, at last, a gurt big ball of red hot fire, as big as my head, went right atween t' parson's legs, as he keeps generally a straddle! as he stood holding t' auld mare, poor beast! which was hardly more in her right wits, nor me."

"Oh! what a pheenomeena was there!" cried Mr. Bleathead, interrupting his lady; "it was, as if all Hell was broke loose! Gad, Gad only knows what he parmits. It is nat to tell, it is nat to tell, what a pheenomeena that was!"

"Aye! true enough, " said Mrs. Bleathead, " that's t' word! peenomeena! so you called it, Parson, at that very moment, as it rushed atween your legs; but I always forget t' name on't. Pray, Captain Normanbairn, are you used to see these peenomeenas a-rushing about atween folks legs, in them foreign parts, where you left your own limb? May be, it was a peenomeena, as slapped off that!"

The captain had, by this time, recovered his tranquillity, and began to be amused a little, in spite of his disgust; he, therefore, replied to the lady, that she was quite right; it was something of the same nature, that deprived him of his leg; and that it was a great mercy he did not lose both legs, instead of one.

"Well! that's what I said to t' Parson," cried the lady; "I told him that! Says I, Parson, it was a marcy that you was made to stand wi' your legs a straddle, if it was but to save 'em from that there peenomeena, as might have slapped 'em both clean off, an' left you ne'er a foot to stand on!"

When the lady had concluded this speech, she rose to depart, declaring, that she did not believe they should get home, now, without a ducking, and her obedient husband took his hat to accompany her; when Mr. Normanburn, who had appeared absorbed in his own reflections for some time past, addressed himself to

Mr. Bleathead, and said in a hurried manner, that if he was not in haste, he should be glad of a conference with him in his study. The parson looked doubtful, as not daring to assent without his wife's permission; but this Mrs. Bleathead with more than her wonted goodness immediately granted, in these words. "Aye, to be sure, Parson! what, I'll run t' risk of a sousing to oblige Squire Normanbairn! and don't flutter yourself for me, my dear! Mrs. Glassumtum, here, 'ull give me house room, an little Miss 'ull, may be, find her tongue."

Without making the least reply to this, the two gentlemen, in a very ceremonious manner, retired; he of the handkerchief conducting his guest of the wig, with as much respect and attention as if he had been a bishop. As soon as they were gone, Mrs. Glassington proposed, that the rest of the party should adjourn to a little seat in the garden, where they might enjoy a breath of air, if there was one,

and Mrs. Bleathead made no objection to the proposal; but the captain, begging to be excused, took Mabella's hand, and led her away to his favourite walk, which was very near the house, and the two ladies went, tête-à-tête, to occupy the garden seat. They were no sooner placed there, than the visitor began, thus:

"I'm so glad, Mrs. Glossumtun, that at last we have happened to come together! I can tell you, that it's what I've a lookt to, some time, and I should a done myself the honour to call afore, but t' parson wi' his nonsense flayed me. He said it would be a liberty, forsooth! as you was of the blood of the Narmanbairns, and such as that! but I tell'd him, says I, a parson's wife in this here country is as much a gentlewoman as another, let her have what blood she will in her veins, and, for that matter, Michel Thatcher, my father, was an old tenant of the Narmanbairn estate, and to do old Madam justice, though it can't be said she used her own

flesh and blood better than so much carrion, yet she did what was fair enough i' t' case of her tenants.

"She used my mother shamefully!" cried Mrs. Glassington, bursting into a passion of tears.

"Lord bless you, honey! don't fret so!" answered Mrs. Bleathead, in a compassionate tone; "she did, to be sure, do every thing an auld harridan could do to tenter and torment her own daughter. One may say, and now she's gone to her reward there's no harm, not a bit, in it! as I tell t' parson; one may say she killed your poor father! as fine a young man, as one would wish to see married; and, if she'd a conscience the length of my nail, she'd a had some parlous twinges about his being nigh starved to death! that is, he wanted wine, and them there things. Then, as if she had a league with the devil, as Parson Bleathead says is common enough; nay, I know a person, which has, as sure, as sure! an' he's a

man, too! but it's best to say little. He makes me creep to see him come into t' hoose, an' every now an' then he takes t' whim to come an' talk to t' parson, as I tell him, for no good! But that's nowt to auld Madam! t' upshot of all was making her leave her poor dear bairns, as if she'd no bowls at all, and go and live wi' her; and then to give all to that Doctor Lightfoot and his son, a mean brag! But every body says it 'ull do him no good! He's more like a ghost than any thing else; an', I hear, goes gaming his money away in a pretty manner. Nay, they say, at times, he's not right; no wonder! why, auld Madam certainly walks; I know them, as has seed her."

"Gracious Heaven!" cried Mrs. Glassington, "you don't say so? What, my grandmother walk? No, no, there is no such thing *now!* that's certain! if there was such a thing permitted, certainly she is more likely than any body else; she can never be in peace wherever she is."

"That's sure enough, Mrs. Glassumtun," answered the intelligent visitor; "and take my word for it, the old wretch walks at Narmanbairn Hoose. I've told t' parson, afore now, that he ought to tell Squire Normanbairn of it, as may be, she has something to communicate, and certainly t' Squire 's t' proper person to speak to her: as to hexercising her, that Madam Glossumtun, you know, is t' parson's business; and, as I tells him, she is a woman, which I'd hexercise with a horsewhip."

"Then do you really think there are such things, as people coming again, and ghosts, and spirits, and witches?" asked Mrs. Glassington in a faint voice, that seemed to say she half believed it, too. "Nay, Madam, as to that," answered Mrs. Bleathead, "it's not what *I* believe, nor what one, nor t'other says about 'em! t' parson shewed me i' t' Bible about 'em, and, what's more, he

knows, to his sorrow, what it is to be spited by 'em; he's a sufferëd, night after night, by that same good-for-nothing fellow, as I was mentioning, one Middlemist, a sort of a gentleman, as he call's hisself, as has lodged and boarded, these seven years, at Jobson Simpson's. Lord, Madam! I could tell you, if I durst, what that Middlemist has contrived, but you'd better hear t' parson. Mrs. Simpson says, as how that Mr. Middlemist is no more a conjuror, than my husband, and that he's, without hexception, the best fellow, that any body could have i' t' hoose; with many other things, as that he knows all languages, and more things, than I can tell! but I believe he knows more than he ought, and that it is old Smoker that puts words in his mouth."

"It's very odd, if it be true!" said Mrs. Glassington. "What aged man is he?"

"Oh! not very old; not more than forty-five, I dare say," answered Mrs.

Bleathead: but he's too cunning to tell his age, or any thing else."

"Is he a gentlemanly man?" asked the widow.

"So, so, for that, Madam," answered her companion.

The conversation then took another turn; Mrs. Bleathead, with amazing volubility, informed Mrs. Glassington of all the marriages, deaths, births, quarrels, and intrigues of the neighbourhood, as far as they had come to her knowledge, or as she could imagine them. From these topics she digressed to the domestic management of those she was more intimately connected with; described their habits, pointed out what she considered errors in them; told from what towns, and shops, the cheapest things were to be got; and advised Mrs. Glassington, by all means, to adopt such and such plans in procuring certain little ornamental parts of dress, which were not to be had near at hand: all these things did

Mrs. Bleathead discourse upon, and so much to the taste of Mrs. Glassington, that that good lady felt fully persuaded of her cleverness, and thought, that though she was very vulgar, she might prove an useful neighbour. The fruit of this conviction was a promise to take a cup of tea with Mrs. Bleathead, before the days grew too short, and an invitation to that lady and her reverend spouse to do the same with the Purlbeck family, on the Sunday week. These matters being settled, the ladies returned to the parlour, where Mr. Bleathead soon joined them.

CHAP. II.

A tête-à-tête, in which Mr. Normanburn shews his considerate Humanity, and other Things worth the Reader's Attention; with a matrimonial Duet.

WITH the same gravity, ceremony, and dignity, that he had shewn on quitting the parlour, Mr. Normanburn conducted his new acquaintance up stairs to his study, where, having successfully urged him to be seated, he took the handkerchief from his chin, and addressed him thus :—

"As it is impossible for you to be pregnant, Sir, and no ill consequence can therefore arise from your seeing how much I am in dishabille, I shall not apologize for receiving you without shaving! God knows!" (he here uttered a deep sigh) "that I have made every effort to-

day to shave myself! but it was not to be! my avocations are so numerous! my cares so bitter! oh! Reverend Tobit, I have more than I can bear! my flesh is consumed on my bones!"

"Gad forbid! Gad forbid!" returned the auditor, not very certain of what this address could mean.

"Deep mental sorrow and affliction wastes me," continued Mr. Normanburn, "and it is of---of---of---a---a---sort of---"

"Gad forbid! Gad forbid!" repeated the parson; not at all seeing what Normanburn was aiming at. A considerable pause ensued, and neither of the gentlemen seemed desirous to interrupt it. At length, Mr. Normanburn, as if willing to change the conversation, said, "Have you lived long in this neighbourhood, Mr. Bleathead?"

"Yas! yas, Sir! a cansiderable time; not less than atween eight an nine year," returned the parson; "I took the cure of Burnthwaite just after my present warthy Rector, the Rev. David Snufter,

was indacted to the living, Sar! a vary warthy man, and a good Christian, Sar! save, that he loveth harseflash too well! more's the pity! more's the pity! It's nat to tell! it's nat to tell! what times and seasons I have hit on, to warn him again harseflash! the sin of harseflash, Sir! that is, as far as my sitiation wad lat me go! but all in vain! all in vain! harseflash was victorious, and my warthy head goeth on, ranning and ranning to my great regrat and sarrow."

Though Mr. Bleathead was not famous for making observations on persons, and occurrences, that were present to his eyes, he yet was a little struck with the air of perfect abstraction exhibited by Mr. Normanburn, who, as far as he could judge, did not seem at all moved with the importance his companion exhibited in the remarkable anecdote of his reproving his rector for his passion for horseflesh; on the contrary, he sat with his hands joined together, and his eyes fixed most

earnestly on one corner of the room, not seeming conscious that anybody was present. Silence again prevailed! Mr. Bleathead looked at his watch, and surveyed the clouds, and buttoned another button of his waistcoat, and hemmed aloud, in order to arouse his companion from his trance, without at the same time provoking him; a thing of which he had an inward dread. All this, however, was ineffectual; Mr. Normanburn sat, as if turned to stone: at last, he rose rather hastily, thrust his hands into his breeches pockets, and made a stride or two towards the window, muttering something to himself.

This behaviour by no means quieted the poor parson's apprehensions, or allayed his fear of the sanity of Mr. Normanburn; and, being strongly pressed to quit the room by more motives than one, he rose from his chair to take leave: as he did so, however, he touched the little bell we have before commemorated with

his elbow, and threw it on the floor, an accident that restored Mr. Normanburn to his recollection, while it nearly deprived Mr. Bleathead of the little he could at any time boast of.

"Gad Lard preserve us!" cried he with unfeigned fervour; "I tak Gad to witness, that it is a snare of the evil one! I meant no harm!" No sooner had he uttered these words, than Mr. Normanburn, releasing his right hand from the pocket that nourished it, seized that of Mr. Bleathead, and said, "Yes, Reverend Tobit! that I can readily credit; that arch enemy of mankind is busy! too busy——here!" laying great stress on the concluding word *here*.

This information did not seem by any means agreeable to Mr. Bleathead; he turned his eyes cautiously this way and that, as if he expected to see the horns and hoof peeping out from the floor. It so happened, however, that he saw nothing of the kind, for some reason or other

not come to our knowledge; and gathering courage from this favourable circumstance, he ventured to comply with Mr. Normanburn's earnest entreaty to sit down again. As soon as he was seated, that gentleman spoke thus to him:—

"You must know very well, Mr. Bleathead, that ever since the death of my mother I have lived, as nearly as possible, alone; I have not, indeed, been fit for any society, even that of my own family!" "Yas, Sir! yas! that I perceive, and know!" cried Mr. Bleathead.

"At first, perhaps, it might be grief for her, and the misfortunes of my family! but—Sir! you are a divine---I fear not then to tell you my case," continued Mr. Normanburn. "It is a very hard one, Sir, and, perhaps, more hard than singular. I have long since got over my grief for my mother; that was to be expected, for I knew but little of her: but I have been prevented from taking pleasure in any thing, even in the

society of my brother, sister, and child, by the most infernal plot!"

"Gad Lard! Gad Lard!" cried Bleathead, seeing the face and frame of his companion convulsed with agony; and pushing his own chair back, as if he had expected the wall would give way to admit him. Mr. Normanburn soon recovered himself, and went on. "I don't know, Sir, that I should have ventured to speak of this diabolical affair, in this age of mockery, derision and every thing that is like infidelity! at least, such the world was, when I last saw it! but I have lately, that is, within the last two or three years, made the Holy Scriptures my study, with a view to discover whether what I feel and see, is a fruit of solitude and weakness of brain, or a reality."

"And which is it, Sar?" asked Bleathead with the simplicity of a babe.

"That, so righteous a man as you seem, will answer for yourself, when you know

the facts," continued Mr. Normanburn. "I have long thought of consulting some pious Divine, and my sister's meeting with you at Burnthwaite, just when I had internally resolved to open my mind, is, I believe more than chance; it is a special providence!"

"Nat to be doubted, Sir! nat to be doubted!" cried Bleathead, recovering himself, and swelling into great importance.

I am glad *you* think so!" said Mr. Normanburn, with a sigh. "I have been collecting, all this day, spirits and matter for this conference! but, after all, I fear it must not be *now!* I have said too much—the exertion—Oh! Sir, let me see you again! on Tuesday! I—I may then tell all, and receive ghostly comfort!"

As might be expected from Mr. Bleathead's good breeding, he did not refuse to renew his visit on Tuesday; but it was a mental reservation of, *if* Mr. Norman-

burn was not mad, and, making a low bow, he rejoined his lady, as we have seen above.

And, now, this original couple, perceiving that the heavens were still threatening the inhabitants of that part of the country with a storm, hastened to take leave of the Captain and Mrs. Glassington, and set out on their return to Burnthwaite. They had scarcely cleared the garden, when the Divine, uttering an "Ah!" that might (if the wind had sat fair for it) have been heard within the cottage, his tender wife inquired, what was the matter with him, that he groaned so loud. To this he replied by another "Ah!" so long, so loud, and so profound, that Mrs. Bleathead was fully convinced the heat or some other cause had brought on a fit of what she called the *pinch bowls* (an expression, by-the-bye, that she always accompanied with a laugh; whether provoked by the similarity of sound, the said expression had to *punch bowl*, or by some

secret witty association, we cannot determine) and, under the persuasion that her husband was suffering from these *pinch bowls*, she said, laughing, "If you groan and girn, ever so hard, Parson, you're like to bear it, till we've got into't lane! What, I suppose 't Squire's bristles has set you off."

"Na! na! Missis Blatehaed! that's nat it, that's nat it!" returned the worthy Divine; "By the blessing of Gad, my bowls are tolerably camposed: but, Gad Lard! Gad Lard! that poor Squire Narmanbairn is mad, as mad! a vary wretched spactacle! vary indeed! and, I do believe, hath some unrevealed crime on his canscience!"

"Aye, indeed! is that the shoe that pinches!" answered Mrs. Bleathead: what do you think it can be, Parson?"

"Nay, Missis Blatéhaed, it's nat for me to tell that," replied the Parson; "he was almost confessing the sin, when he made a boggle, and so he would make me promise to come again on Tuesday!

but the Lard farbid that I should pat my head and my life in jeöpardy by exposing myself to the chimeras (which he pronounced *Shimmeras*) of a maniac! I will nat go! Gad willing, I will nat go!"

"Well! if ever I heard any thing so rude in my life," exclaimed the wife; "what? not go to Squire Normanbairn's, which you've been wishing for so long. I'll have no such meagrims, Parson Bleathead! go you shall, if I'm alive to make you! and whatever it is, as hangs on the poor gentleman's mind, he'll be all the better for t' telling it, and you never the worse for t' hearing! and, as to all that silly pother about Joe Pardy, and Shimmers, I'll have none of it! a pretty affair, indeed! when you've an opportunity here to come to t' upshot of some bloody murder, may be, whereby we might make some money (for what else but a murder could sagg down a man i' that way!) you're to come wi' your fright about Joe Pardy! and the Lord knows what! you

oftenough talk about that fellow, Joe Pardy, but who he is, I know no more than my grandmother."

Mr. Bleathead knew that his wife would be obeyed, and independently of his unfitness to contest any matter with her, he made a sort of conscience of indemnifying her this way for certain wrongs, which, however privately done, the voice of slander sometimes repeated aloud, and thus amused the whole village of Burnthwaite. His inward love of justice, however, was not his only reason for quiet submission on most occasions; he knew that, when contended with, Mrs. Bleathead had rather an unfortunate habit of recalling to his mind, and publishing to others, all the little peccadilloes of that kind, that had come to her knowledge, and this without any regard to who was or was not present, to record the charges. But on the present occasion this fear was outweighed by another still more potent, and to his wife's harangue

he replied in a quaking tone, "In camparison to what I dread, marder wad be a flea-bite, Mrs. Blatehad! and I cannat, I cannat expose myself to the enemy."—

"And yet you can expose yourself enough, Mr. Parson, wi' your trollops, and your snug visits to t' Moor, and the Lord knows where!" interrupted Mrs. Bleathead, "and all to injure your tender wife, and your poor brats! and, here, when you've nothing it' world to do, but go and hear a man talk, forsooth! you can't! not you! no! no! you must slink away, and break the connexion I've made here with a gentlewoman! and Mrs. Glossumtun is a gentlewoman, every inch of her! But, as I said before, go you *shall!* what, murder's no wore than adultery, you pitiful fellow! go you *shall*, and I shall make a point of coming to visit my new friend again! a very nice woman! I foresee we shall be great friends! and right thick!"

"Mrs. Blatehad!" said the Parson, "if the sin, I canceive to be that of this poor wretch is warse than marder, as I firmly believe it to be, I may be drawn into a campact that makes my hair rise." "Aye, like his beard!" interrupted the lady; "but I will have my way, Parson! I've forgiven what I'll never forgive again, and so, if you've any misgivings, you'd better consult your friend Middlemist, only don't bring him to pester me, I insist."

Mrs. Bleathead pronounced these last words with great violence, and, as if to play a chorus to her, the heavens began to rumble in such a manner, that all her other fears and feelings were absorbed in the one fear for her own safety, and she hurried on, as fast as possible, crying out, "a pretty case we shall be in, if another peenomeena should fall!"

All her haste, however, did not save her and her husband from a complete drenching, and they reached home wet to the skin.

CHAP. III.

In which Mr. Middlemist is introduced to the Reader.

The hint Mrs. Bleathead had thrown out respecting Mr. Middlemist was not lost upon her husband, and he would have gone that very evening to consult the gentleman, had not the continuance of the storm prevented him: the next day he was engaged in his school till noon, and after that time he had to look over a sermon, and make some few verbal alterations in it, to adapt it for a funeral discourse he was to preach on the morrow. Mr. Middlemist, as if he had known that he was wished for, and was determined to disappoint, did not make his appearance at the Rectory, and it was not till the evening of Monday that Mr. Bleathead

found himself tête-à-tête with that gentleman in Jobson Simpson's best room.

Before we relate what passed between these two gentlemen, it may not be amiss to give the reader a description of Mr. Middlemist, who passed at Burnthwaite for a sort of wise man, or conjuror, at least, among the majority of the people.

This gentleman was between forty and fifty years old, rather short in stature, very upright, very pale, and very thin. His face was long and narrow, his eyes deep set and sparkling, his mouth had a peculiar expression from being generally closely compressed; his beard and whiskers of a black colour, and the latter ornaments he nourished, till they almost met at his chin, which appeared between the hair, of no greater diameter than an Irish shilling: his head was thinly covered with hair that had been bleached by Time's frost, and was, besides, rather a singularly shaped head. His manners were quiet and gentlemanly, and, generally

speaking, he was rather a hearer than a speaker in society; not that he wanted matter, for he was well informed on most subjects, but because he was naturally inclined to taciturnity.

With some pretensions to wit, and a great deal of humour, he almost never laughed, and was seldom observed to smile; but he neither looked morose nor unhappy. He never obtruded his advice or opinion on any one, and even when solicited to give it, it was with reluctance he complied, because, as he was wont to say, he did not like throwing away breath. Yet, with all this, Mr. Middlemist could tell a good story, and sing a humorous song inimitably, and among the very few acquaintances he had, he was much liked.

We must not, however, forbear to mention, that there was one circumstance in the conduct of this gentleman, that was a considerable drawback on the good qualities and perfections we have

enumerated above, and had occasioned him more ill-will than almost any thing else could have done, among his curious neighbours; and this was, that he had never, to any person, said anything about himself, or told, either where he came from, where he was born, what was his fortune, his profession, or his connexions; and, though many traps had been laid to surprise him into a confession, he had always escaped them. He had four rooms in Mr. Simpson's house, (indeed, he nearly occupied the whole of the house); one of these was his bed-room, one his sitting-room, and the two others, which opened into each other, were furnished with books, mathematical instruments, globes, and a turning lathe. These two rooms were cleaned very seldom, and when they were, the curiosities they contained were either removed or put under lock and key, so that not even Mrs. Simpson knew exactly what there was.

During the first two years of his residence at Burnthwaite, he was quite unnoticed by the people in the neighbourhood, and Mr. Bleathead and Dr. Stunt were almost, or entirely, his sole companions; but, at the end of that time, finding his health required more exercise than he was accustomed to take, he resumed his sporting habits, and carried a gun, to own the truth, rather for show than use, for he had not enthusiasm enough to be a sportsman. He obtained permission to shoot over the manor of Normanburn, and in a few months formed a slight acquaintance with some of the sporting gentlemen in the neighbourhood; but he was very shy, and when he had in his turn given his dinner, and done all that politeness dictated, he seemed to care little about any body or any thing. Once a year he was a short time absent; and as his journey usually took place just after Christmas, when the

weather is for the most part severe and boisterous, the common people never failed to observe, that he went in a wind, and came back in a wind, and good luck for them that did not meet him.

What their idea of his being a cunning man originated in, we know not; but, whatever it was, the opinion maintained its ground, and he had sometimes rather curious applications made to him, in behalf of those who had lost their spoons, or their sweethearts, or who fancied themselves or their cattle bewitched. Once or twice he attempted to convince his visitors that he had no interest whatever with his Infernal Highness, but all in vain! he found that what he said only confirmed their original belief, and occasioned him more trouble, and more loss of time, than giving into their whim could possibly do: so, thenceforward, he listened with silent and inflexible gravity to their statements, and applied such re-

medies, or gave such answers, as never failed to contribute to the benefit and satisfaction of his clients.

In process of time, he acquired a sort of taste for this kind of amusement, and being an ingenious man, he invented two or three little tricks, in the execution of which he was not a little assisted by the credulity of his visitors. Among those who believed in the necromantic powers of Mr. Middlemist, Mrs. Bleathead stood conspicuous; and though she was sometimes amused with him, especially when he talked to the boys, with whom he was very cheerful, and seemed to forget his taciturnity, she could not divest herself of the awe naturally inspired by those who are believed to have a commission from the other world, whether from above or below. Then Mr. Bleathead's favourite topics were Religion and Politics; we hardly need add that, in the former, he was orthodox, and, in the latter, very positive and obstinate. In-

deed, he would have ventured his salvation on the truth of his opinions and doctrines, while for his superiors, or those in office, he had a veneration almost amounting to idolatry. He had ever a string of texts at their service, and he usually delivered them with a force, an emphasis, a voice, and a gesture, far beyond our weak powers to give any idea of. Indeed, to own the truth, so vehement and warm was this worthy divine on such occasions, that he usually dumbfounded all his adversaries, and was considered an admirable arguer, and one who was perfectly unanswerable. In the conversations that passed between Mr. Middlemist and this strenuous supporter of church authority, excommunication, sinecures, pensions, jobs, rotten boroughs, standing armies, income tax, divine right, passive obedience, &c. the case was not exactly so; for, though Mr. Middlemist never answered assertion by assertion, or loudness by loudness; in

short, though he said nothing, or seemed to say nothing that could offend or enrage any one, he usually left the poor parson worked up to a state nearly bordering on frenzy, and declaring, that he was no man, but the Devil in person.

Though this declaration was uttered in a moment of fierce wrath, it, nevertheless, was not merely the offspring of rage, for, in his cooler moments, Mr. Bleathead really believed that nothing merely human, could do and say, what Mr. Middlemist did and said; and, whenever he imparted this belief to his gentle mate, that lady urged him to use his lawful power, and *exercise* the conjuror! For some reason or other, Mr. Bleathead declined this, and he and his neighbour continued the sort of neighbourly intercourse that had commenced so early between them.

After what we have said, the reader will not be surprised to find Mr. Bleathead, by his wife's recommendation,

where we last left him, though, perhaps, he had not quite made up his mind, as to the use he should make of Mr. Middlemist's occult powers, or whether it would be lawful to use them at all, or not! Be this as it may, he hastened to that gentleman, with a stride somewhat longer than usual, and threw himself into a chair, in a state of profuse perspiration. Mr. Middlemist rung the bell, and ordered his man, Meek Mush, to bring fruit and wine-glasses; an order quickly and silently obeyed; and the man having withdrawn, and the master having decanted a bottle of fresh Port, the two gentlemen were left alone, and there passed between them a delectable conversation, well worthy of a place in this authentic history, and of a chapter to itself.

CHAP. IV.

Mental Reservations, and the Consequences of visiting a Conjuror.

The two gentlemen being arranged, as we said at the close of our third chapter, the glasses filled, and a few unmeaning phrases uttered, Mr. Middlemist fixed his sharp eyes on the countenance of his neighbour, which bore evident marks of great perturbation of soul. His eyes stared, his cheeks flushed, his chin had a sort of involuntary motion, large drops of sweat coursed each other down his capacious cheek, and he had unconsciously pushed his wig on one side, which gave a high finish to the tout-ensemble.

Less discernment than Middlemist was possessed of would have sufficed to discover that something extraordinary had moved Mr. Bleathead, whose broad,

plump, rosy, round, unmeaning face, except when moved by anger, or some very strong passion, was perhaps as void of expression, as heart could wish: and no sooner had Middlemist made the discovery, than he determined to let the matter take its own course, and to leave the parson, who was evidently in pain, to a natural delivery.

In pursuance of this determination, he asked him, if he had heard whose horse won on Saturday, at York? thinking that he was very far from any thing that could move his visitor's feelings on that head.

"Harse, Sir!" cried Bleathead, "a harse, did you say? Na! na! I don't meddle with harses, Mr. Meddlemest, they are out of my line!"

"Though under your hand so often," said Middlemist: to this the parson made no other reply, but by taking his whole glass of wine into his mouth at once, and blowing out his cheeks with it, while his two eyes were fixed on the ceiling of the

room, (so that he much resembled Bacchus on a sign-post) he swallowed the whole, at one gulp. A fearful pause ensued, during which, Middlemist arose from his chair, and turned an hour glass, that stood on a side-table. As he reseated himself, the worthy divine uttered three loud hems! that made the room ring again.

"A lucky number! three!" said Middlemist.

"Na doubt!" replied the parson, "it mast be fartnate! it is the namber of the ever-blessed Trinity!" To this his hearer replied, by drawing down the corners of his mouth, elevating his eye-brows, and filling his glass: the parson followed his example in the last particular, and another silence ensued. At last, Mr. Bleathead, unable any longer to contain himself, expressed himself in these words.

"Mester Meddlemest! hem!" The only reply Middlemist made was by a sort of arch inclination of the head: the parson went on. "Sence I saw yau last,

Sar, a mast distressing occarrence hath befallen me."

"I'm sorry for it! I did not hear that Mrs. Bleathead was ill," replied Middlemist.

"Na! na!" cried the parson, now growing more courageous from the wine he had gulped, "nathing of that kind, Sar! this is a thing that maketh my vitals quake, a disagreeable occarrence!"

"Um! disagreeable, um!" answered Middlemist. The parson went on.

"It wad be nathing out of the common course of nature for Mestress Blatehad to be afflected with melodies, deseases, and other accidents of martality! and, in sach cases, the truly pious Christian larns for to sabmet! and for to cry with pious David, the Lard gave, and the Lard hath taken away! blassed be the name of the Lard."

"Then she *is* alive, yet?" said Middlemist; "I have the honour to drink long life to her, Mr. Bleathead!"

"Na! na! that's nat vary prabable!" answered the husband, "she hath of late been a hailing weman, and can never reach to any langth of years. But, 'tis nat to tell, what hanxiety I have suffered abaut her! and now another sabject, in the way of profassional duties, disquiets me!"

"Ha! lost a fee, perhaps?" said Middlemist.

"Nat so! nat so! warse! warse! a case, a case, I have made an unadvised pramise, Mester Meddlemest; but I had a resarvation in making it, and so, and so, you know, I'm nat bound in the sight of Gad to keep it?"

"Ha! you've been reading the history of Francis I., of France, I presume?" said Middlemist: "Well! you truly pious folks reconcile all these things, and, I dare say, they are quite right. As I said before, Sir, long life to Mrs. Bleathead! may she live a thousand years!"

"Na! na! nat so!" cried Bleathead; "that wad nat be desirable, Sar! but this affair, Mester Meddlemest, is prassing, and to-marrow! to-marrow I must undertake it, Gad willing!"

Still the perverse auditor would not ask what the affair was; he walked to the window, and surveying the clouds, he said, he thought there would be a storm again, soon.

"Gad forbid! Gad forbid!" cried Bleathead, "it may come to-marrow! it may be sent specially for me!"

"I did not know your interest was so great above stairs," replied Middlemist; "I hope you will exert it in favour of our farmers, who are in some pain for the harvest! It's rather late this year!"

"Yas! yas! doubtless; I shall offer up my prayers for them," cried Bleathead; "but that's nat the thing, Mester Meddlemest!"

"I should have thought it was,"

answered the other, "I always understood it was the true and orthodox way! but I am glad to be better informed, and from such high authority, too!"

"Gad Lard! my authority is a mere nathing," cried Bleathead; yet pleased with what he took for a compliment.

"Where?" asked the other. To this no answer was given, and Bleathead now grown bolder, fixed his hands on his knees, as they stood a yard apart, and looking his companion full in the face, as if to see how he was affected, "There is na doubt that men have made campacts with the evil one!" There he stopped, as if for a reply, and Middlemist, nodding in a singularly arch way, filled his glass, and said, "My service to your reverence!"

Poor Mr. Bleathead thought he saw something very like a confession in this, and, as the evening was now becoming dusky, he did not feel quite at his ease; it was, he thought, so awful to hear a

man own such a compact! however, he went on.

"That wicked, accarsed, and rebellious spirit, the father of lies, and promoter of fornication, adultery, and all the seven deadly sins——"

"Nay, nay!" cried Middlemist, half smiling, "I shall not sit patiently, and hear his satanic majesty so abused! we owe to him all useful and curious inventions, all liberal arts and sciences, and surely we ought to treat him with civility in return!"

"Gad Lard!" exclaimed Bleathead, "do my ears hare sich blaspheemy?"

"What is blaspheemy?" asked Middlemist. This was one of those provoking, puzzling questions, that enraged him they were addressed to, as it was right, he thought, to try to answer, though, somehow, he did not always satisfy his hearers. In rather a loud key, he answered thus.

"What *is* blaspheemy, Sar? it is one

of the sacred mysteries, Sar, and he who utters the wards you have uttered, is a blasphemer, Sar!"

"Many who use the sacred mysteries are blasphemers then? I believe it!" said Middlemist.

"And I believe, Sar," cried Bleathead in an angry tone, "that there are wecked parsons in the world, (here Middlemist nodded) who make campacts with the devil, and sell their precious souls for his vain and deceitful help."

"Ah! they drive a good bargain, I dare say, Mr. Bleathead!" answered Middlemist.

"Gad Lard presarve me!" exclaimed the horrified Bleathead, "do I live to hare you own sach deadly sin! bat, Sar, it is my duty to warn you, and exhart you! if it be nat too late!"

"It *is* too late!" said Middlemist: then, after a pause, he added: "If I had not heard you own your belief in such compacts, my good neighbour, I should

not have given credit to a report, that you actually did so!"

"May be nat, Sar," replied Bleathead; "but, doubtless, you have reasons—yas, Sar, you have reasons far weshing na one to cradit sach things: but let me tell you, Mester Meddlemest, that exparience hath shewed me many! yas, many proofs of sach campacts! and it is na langer ago, than last Friday, Sar, a vary malancholy enstance of sach a campact was before my eyes, Sar! Wad ye nat have me believe my eyes, Sar? A man who hath lived by the will of Gad many years in solitude, Sar, and from thence, I conjacture, hath been drawd into the band of bremstone, Sar! a poor creature hardly human, Sar! who hath a beard of perdigious langth, Sar, and who told me himself, that the arch-enemy was busy *here*, Sar, and that it was all brought about by a infarnal plat! Wad ye nat have me believe my ears, Sar?"

" Not always," said Middlemist, " but where does this poor dealer in brimstone dwell?"

" He dwelleth at Parlbeck, Sar, and is na other bat Squire Narmanbairn hisself!" answered Bleathead.

" Ah! what, parson, have you got access to him at last?" said Middlemist. " I thought he never saw a stranger! I should like to see him myself!"

" Nat to be daubted, Sar," answered Bleathead, " bat I know nat! I know nat! I want to ask you one question, Mester Meddlemest, and that is, whather one in campact with Satan hath any power to hurt any of Gad's own sarvants? his menesters? Mester Meddlemest! and I call upon you in the name of Jesus, the Saviour, to answer me truly."

Middlemist now perceived how the matter was, and that the parson was anxious to know, whether he could with safety revisit Purlbeck Cottage, and imagined that, after such a call, (he Middle-

mist) could not tell him a lie: the strange folly of the man, which seemed now to have reached its acmé, astonished Middlemist, though he knew him so well, and had so often extracted amusement from him; and he did not immediately reply, but sat looking earnestly at his perturbed countenance. Bleathead, finding he did not answer, began to tremble, and cried, in a quaking voice, "In the name of Jesus, I canjure thee!"

Having once got the right clue, Middlemist thought he would not spoil sport, by expostulations that would certainly be thrown away, nor put any obstacles in the way of the good man's repeating his visit to Mr. Normanburn, as he foresaw he should derive much amusement from the prosecution of so strange a connexion; he therefore drew himself up, and with great emphasis pronounced the monosyllable "No!" in a key that made Bleathead start again. As soon as

that reverend gentleman could speak, he said, "I rejoice, Sar, I rejoice to hare it! Gad be thanked! Gad be thanked! then I may venture to vesit the afflicted, and mayhap, by the grace of Gad, I may chase away the foul fiend! Bat now, mester Meddlemest, that answer hath made me bold, and the namber of years I have known you, Mester Meddlemest, have begat in me a arnestness for your selvation, Sar; and seeing the case of Squire Narmanbairn so nearly resembleth your own, at least, so I believe, I wad fain say a word of exhartation to you first."

"It is too late," cried Middlemist, in a grave tone, and at the same time a deep sigh, which Bleathead's imagination converted into a groan, issued from a corner of the room.

Had the worthy clergyman been a Papist, he would have crossed himself; as it was, he tried to pronounce the name of Jesus, but his lips refused their of-

fice: he would have groaned, but his voice, like Macbeth's Amen, stuck in his throat; he tried to rise, but he felt as if glued to his chair; and, at that moment, a heavy hand was laid on his, which rested on his knee. Fear took complete possession of his senses, and he sat suffering much more than those who are not superstitious would imagine possible; at last, by a wonderful effort, the offspring of despair, he did utter the word Jesus; and, as he expected, the heavy hand was removed, but it was succeeded by a touch cold enough to freeze the blood in his veins, at least, so he afterwards described it, and what might have followed this, it is impossible to tell, had not Meek Mush, at that instant, brought in a letter for his master. Mr. Bleathead was instantly relieved, and he has often declared, and now declares, that there was, at the time, a strong smell of brimstone, for which he accounts in the most orthodox manner.

Without taking any notice of his trepidation, or addressing a single word to him, Middlemist bid his man bring a candle; and no sooner did the light arrive, than Mr. Bleathead, snatching his hat, hurried away as fast as his legs would carry him; leaving his companion to read his letter, and to think whether he could not by some means extract amusement from his neighbour's credulity.

CHAP. V.

Babel.—Nothing new under the Sun.—The fatal Consequences of meddling with Apples.—A Battle.—Hints for Ushers.

On the following evening Mr. Middlemist did not forget either where his neighbour had been, or what he had been about; and by the time he thought he might be returned to the rectory, Mr. Middlemist made his appearance in the garden in front of the house. His ears were there assailed by a noise of tongues, to which, probably (for we speak not with certainty on so knotty a point) the confusion at Babel was a mere mouse. And here we cannot help pausing, to apologize for the use of a comparison, so old, so worn, so weather-beaten, as this of Babel; a comparison that has served writers in all ages, and on all

subjects where noise was concerned, but which, from its real beauty, its truth, its aptness, and the religious ideas connected with it, never fails to give pleasure to the user, and, we are led to hope, to the reader, too. If, however, some one more captious than the rest, should pronounce it *stale*, we can only reply that it is neither *flat* nor *unprofitable*, if those who see it will profit as much as they might by the reflections it naturally produces.

We think, moreover, that we may venture to assert without much fear of contradiction, that in the simile and comparison line, there is nothing new under the sun; and that most of those that make so great a figure in our modern authors, whether in verse or prose, are only new versions of what may be seen, and have been seen so many hundred years in Homer, and a few other writers. We may therefore plead example, to recon-

cile us to the fastidious, and proceed with our history.

The noise that Mr. Middlemist heard, proceeded not from a tower, but from a back yard, dignified with the title of play-ground, where the young gentlemen of Mr. Bleathead's school had assembled after supper, or, rather, where they were met together to destroy what was intended for their supper. The affair was thus.

These young gentlemen, during the last fortnight, had been particularly lucky in their predatory visits to places both far and near, and had, among other good things, brought in a large supply of fine codlings, and a mixture of such other apples, as they could meet with: these, as usual, they expected to have for their own support or pleasure, as long as they lasted; and they calculated that with the other spoil, they either had taken, or might take, they should get

over the time to the holidays tolerably well.

Where all food was so scarce, the water-porridge for supper was not to be despised, and accordingly, it was always devoured greedily, and the *store* made them amends for this miserable fare. Now it happened, that Mrs. Bleathead's last domestic act, before she departed with her spouse, to visit Purlbeck Cottage, was to convey into her own peculiar store-room more than half of the above-mentioned apples; and this she effected while the boys were in the school-room: nor did they discover the trick that had been played them, till just as the water-porridge was announced for supper. Then an unlucky urchin, hight Tom Stott, cutting his porridge with his wooden spoon, found his nose assailed with an odour, that informed him, the bishop had set his foot in the pan; and giving way to the impulse of indignation this discovery produced, he threw the

whole mess with some force against the wall, vowing that he would not eat such stinking stuff, and that if the bishop had burnt it, he might wipe his —— with it.

This declaration, and independent conduct received the applause it so well merited from his companions, who, stimulated by his example, converted their porridge into balls, and began the amusement of snowballing. From the school-room they rushed to their store room, to supply what they had so inconsiderately wasted, and, then, the fatal discovery was made, that they had been robbed of a large quantity of fruit, and that, in consequence, they must probably go supperless to bed the following night, whatever they did this.

It would be in vain to describe the tumult that ensued, or the horrid threats that were uttered with wonderful volubility against Mr. and Mrs. Bleathead, who were honoured with epithets, much below the dignity of this history to repeat!

suffice it to say, that the meeting having adjourned to the play-yard, and not having either Mr. or Mrs. Bleathead to operate on, agreed, unanimously, that their representative, Dicky Barefoot, a tall, muscular, awkward lad of seventeen, to whom Mr. Bleathead gave board and education for his services, and who was dignified with the name or title of usher, should have it, as they termed it.

Unconscious of the fate that awaited the porridge and himself, Dicky, as soon as his master and lady had turned into the lane, made his exit from the school-room, and went forth on a love expedition, having commenced a flirtation with a pretty girl in the neighbourhood, who thought herself happy to have attracted the attention of a gentleman, and a *scollard*, as she called him. The hours passed delightfully away, till at last the duskyness of the evening warned the young lady to return home, and Dicky, after obtaining a well fought for kiss,

turned his steps towards the rectory. The noise that he heard there, on his approach, did not alarm him, for he was accustomed to such sounds, and he reached the little gate, undiscovering, and undiscovered, and entered, brandishing in his hand a hazle switch, the emblem of his authority, and with which, on proper occasions, he was wont to lay about him with amazing agility, and no little delight.

Alas! poor Dicky Barefoot! better would it have been for thee, hadst thou at that moment, so fatal to thy hopes of whole garments for autumnal wear! better would it have been for thee, and pleasanter, too, hadst thou remained with thy friend Molly, by the beck side; or, if cruel fate denied this bliss, hadst thou crept slily in, by some other way than the public one, and retired to thy desk to rule books, and mend pens, for the morning labours! but it was not to be! like greater men, Dicky Barefoot was compelled

to fulfil his destiny, and he entered with a truly pedagoguish air, as we said before.

Scarcely had he set his foot within the sacred enclosure, when he was seized by the rude and rebellious hands of the young Britons; his switch, from the carrying of which he derived no small dignity, at least in his own eyes, was wrested from him, and applied in a most liberal way to his shoulders, and the poor creature was then, spite of his cries, and menaces, pulled and pushed backward and forward, till he had no breath left to complain with. It was at this precise moment of time, that Mr. Middlemist heard the riot, and approached the play ground, and happy was it for Dicky Barefoot that he did so, for he, probably, owed his life, or a limb, at least, to this circumstance. One or two of the boys, perceiving Mr. Middlemist, cried out, "Here's t' cunjuror! Lads! here's t' cunjurer!" and, in a few minutes, this humane conjuror was enabled to rescue

all that remained of Dicky Barefoot and his habiliments, videlicet, his body, with the neck of his shirt, the back of his waistcoat, a nondescript piece of coat, the waistband, and half the legs of his pantaloons, and half his head of hair, or thereabouts. To own the truth, indeed, his skin was not whole, either above or below; and (to use a *scientific* phrase) the *claret* flowed from his nose.

The character, that Mr. Middlemist had in the neighbourhood, gave him great weight with the young rioters; and, as soon as he had conducted the poor usher to his cock loft, and made interest for a basin of water-gruel for him, being the only thing to be procured, he returned to the rioting community, and inquired into the cause of so fierce an attack? To inquire was easy; but to understand the answer to the inquiries was not so easy; and all he could hear was, "Apples—Bleathead—rogue—supper—" as to the intermediate words,

they were lost in the passage, or mixt in so complete a way with each other, that not one was distinguishable.

Quite persuaded that he had heard all he was destined to hear, Mr. Middlemist quitted the play-ground, and returned to the garden, where he had not sauntered long, before Mr. Bleathead and his lady, puffing and blowing with fatigue and want of air, arrived, and the young gentlemen, having by this time retired to bed, unwilling to come to any explanation respecting the usher, that evening, Mr. Bleathead did not think of going near them: he invited his neighbour to walk in, and desired Mrs. Bleathead would let them have something for supper. That lady left the room, muttering some amiable phrase to herself, and left her Lord and Mr. Middlemist to the discussion the reader may find in the following chapter.

CHAP. VI.

A delicious Conversation between Parson Bleethead and Mr. Middlemist.—Witchcraft proved from Holy Writ.—Preparations for Supper.

"WELL, Mr. Bleathead, how did you find your new friend at Purlbeck to night?" asked the visitor, not a little curious to learn the particulars respecting so singular a man as Mr. Normanburn was said to be.

"Nat well! nat vary well, Sar!" replied the parson; "but na wander! na wander! well, well, the ways of Gad are enscrutable! yes! enscrutable! and his peths pest finding out! yas! sam he efflects with sore desease! and aching in all their banes; yas, grevious aching! it's nat to tell! it's nat to tell! bat—bat—I'm a bet tired, and nat myself quite!"

"What, I suppose, you were a little

flurried with your reception, Sir?" said Middlemist. "I meant to have asked you the particulars of your conference with this unhappy man; but I see you're tired, so, as it is no business of mine, you know, he may go with his compacts to the end of the chapter.

"Na! na! nat so, Mester Meddlemest," answered Bleathead: "I was deceived! I was deceived! and it is nat a campact with the evil one, as I thought, bat a vesitation! a dreadful vesitation! Bat, cam, now, I will tell you, phoo! (puffing) I wish Messes Blatehad wad let me have sam supper, phoo!"

"Nothing more easy, friend," said Middlemist; "so call for it, if you are in want of it."

"Nat so easy! nat so easy! Mester Meddlemest," answered Bleathead, "for in these empartant metters, Mestress Blatehad mest have her own way."

"You are lucky that she is not resolved to have her own way in every affair,"

said the visitor. "Yas! vary, as you say, vary!" cried the husband in a foolish tone, that said, as plainly as tone could say, "She rules supreme!"

"It is some consolation in this age of misrule, to see *legitimate* authority supported any where," said Middlemist; "and was it banished from the rest of Europe, we could at least boast that it is preserved in this little corner."

"Yas, yas, nat to be doubted! nat to be doubted!" cried the parson. "I always say that there is two places where I will nat allow my lawful authority to be desputed! I mean in the church! where I am Gad's representative, and in my own haase! There! there! I am supreme of course! far, you know, Mester Meddlemest, that the husband is the had of the wife! yas, and vary praper! vary praper! I always presarve legitimate authority! na haase, where there is more descipline, than mine! na haase batter regulated, Sar! my boys are madles, (probably he meant models) madles of

praper gentlemanly canduct, Sar; na haase batter regulated."

"It is *uniquely* regulated, I am willing to own!" answered Middlemist. "Did you find Mr. Normanburn agreeable?"

"Vary—that is! but, as sapper does not cam, I will tell you! oh, 'tis a tarrible affair!" said the perturbed Bleathead.

"You saw Beelzebub, then?" asked Middlemist. This question put his companion in mind, that they were sitting without a candle, and opening the parlour door, he called to the maid to bring one. The maid screamed an answer, and the master, sitting down in the next chair to his visitor, said, "Now, my gad friend, far I thenk you are nat my enemy! you can bay of use to this poor jautleman, I dare say, and, fram your accalt science, you can tell the mast praper way of menaging this affair!"

"What is the affair?" said Middlemist. To this Bleathead did not give an immediate answer; he listened to hear

whether the maid was bringing the candle, and, not hearing her, he again rose, and called for it; she again answered, and the parson again resumed his seat. Middlemist perceived that he was horribly afraid of remaining in the dark, and, without saying a word, he took a little box for producing instantaneous light, that he had had sent for his bed-room, from his pocket, and, as quietly as possible, he adjusted the taper, plunged his match into the bottle, and lighted it; and then, placing the box on the table, he said, "Now we have a light, we may go on Mr. Bleathead! come, it grows late, and I'm rather an early man, at present! this is not my season for working at nights."

The fear Mr. Bleathead had suffered from darkness, however, was not at all equal to that he now felt; for it so happened, that he had neither seen nor heard of these useful matches, and he firmly believed in his own mind, that the light

he now saw was furnished by Middlemist's familiar. By looking at the box and its contents, he might have convinced himself that there was nothing supernatural in the business! but Mr. Bleathead was not famous for research; he had indeed, an almost unbounded credulity in what he called spirituals, and he said, all inquiry into that which belonged to another world was sinful! it was enough to believe that such things were and are: his teeth chattered in his head, though the night was very sultry, and there was not even a breath of air stirring, and Middlemist waited in silence till the fit should be passed.

How long he might have waited, or whether the worthy clergyman's presence of mind would have returned at all or not, we do not presume to determine, had not the distant murmurings of Mrs. Bleathead's sharp querulous voice produced a favourable effect upon him, and reminded him that he wanted his supper,

and that he was not alone in the house with this extraordinary man. He summoned courage enough to speak once more, and after some disjointed sentences, and exclamations of "It's nat to tell!" and "gad Lard," &c. &c. he in substance informed Mr. Middlemist of the following particulars.

That he found Mr. Normanburn in a very depressed state of mind, though certainly better than he had been on Friday; an amendment which he (Bleathead) ascribed to the comfort he had given him on that day. That this unhappy gentleman informed him that he was convinced, either that he was haunted by the spirit of his mother, who regularly appeared to him every evening, or by some fiend, who, doubtless, for some evil purpose, assumed her form, and, in the latter case, he presumed that it must be owing to some evil disposed witch, or wizard in the neighbourhood, who, being in league with Satan, was determined to

procure his eternal condemnation, by driving him out of his senses, while all his sins were yet unrepented, or by compelling him to commit suicide, and so leave no hope for him, even in the merits of his Saviour. He had, he said, kept these things in his heart, and concealed them from his family; but he now felt himself irresistibly urged to reveal them, and that, having from Scripture fully convinced himself that this did not, and could not proceed from a diseased imagination, he had chosen the minister of God for his confidant.

"And, truly," continued Bleathead, "he cad nott have chosen batter! for na prayers nar effarts shall be wanting, on my part, to relieve this poor gentleman from his harrible vesitation; and I wad cansult with you, Mester Meddlemest, on the most potent invocation, and exhartation to be addressed to the Sparit!"

Though Middlemist had long known that his neighbour was not the wisest of

his kind, and, moreover, that he was not a little superstitious! he had no idea that his credulity was so great as it now appeared to be, and his wonder at the circumstance kept him for some minutes silent! This silence Bleathead did not interrupt, except by sundry groans, and he waited, impatiently, for his answer. At last, Middlemist, convinced that every thing in the shape of reason or argument must fail, and sink into annihilation before so rooted a belief, only replied; that in matters of such a nature, and so great importance, Mr. Bleathead was, of course, much better authority than himself, and that, indeed, he had never been present at such a ceremony. "Doubtless," continued, he, "if the church admits that there is such a sin as witchcraft, she has provided proper remedies for it, and these you, Sir, must know better than any layman."

"Yas! yas! may be so! may be so, Sar;" answered Bleathead; "and that

the church doth admet witchcraft is plain! she prayeth against it, Sar! and wad she pray against what she did nat believe?"

"I should suppose not," answered Middlemist! "but, where does the church pray against witchcraft?"

"Where, Sar? why, the very spot is nat in my memory, just now! bat witchcraft is among the works of the flesh, as Paul saith! Idolatry! Witchcraft! in Galatians, 5th chapter, verse the 20th! and we pray against the works of the flesh, surely! Na! na! he that doth deny witchcraft, must deny the Bible and Testament too; for they mast stand and fall together!" said Bleathead. "Then I suppose the clergy must have some power to discomfit witches?" cried Middlemist.

"Na doubt! na doubt!" replied Bleathead: "our Saviour gave his apastles power over the evil spirits."

"In that case," said Middlemist, "you can have no difficulty, for the

clergy are the lawful successors of the apostles! I would have you send this lady or devil to the Red Sea at once!"

"That is nat my defficulty, Sar!" cried Bleathead, "I know my duty, thank Gad! and where sach spirits, as I believe this to be, mast be sent! bat, Sar! I know nat how to descriminate, and find out whather the epparation bay really the soul of the defanct Mrs. Narmanbairn, sent far a gad parpose, or it bay a damon, Sar!"

"The best way would be to ask it," replied Middlemist, coolly.

"May be nat! may be nat!" said Bleathead; "it might be a lying spirit! and what I went from you, Mester Meddlemest, is to know how to destenguish it. Doubtless, you have a power, my gad Sar! doubtless! but I believe, and hope, it is nat a direct campact, only, praps, a geft! a geft! and, if so, it is nat unlawful, provided you use it, as the holy men of old ded, to descomfet the

evil spirits! I will dale weth the sparit, whan I know of what nature it is! I have stadied a form—indeed, I use one always to keep off witches, and their deeds! bat sach a jab, as thes, never fell into my hands, and I am nat equal to it alone! I once saffered sorely! yas, vary sorely! nat so lang ago, neither! to tall the tiuth, Mrs. Blatehad wad parsuade me, it was you who tarmented me."

"And how? in the name of Dr. Faustus?" asked Middlemist.

Bleathead did not seem to like the name he was conjured by, but he answered thus: "You remember my illness two years ago." "Very well!" replied the other.

"Wall!" said Bleathead, "that illness was certainly the effect of witchcraft! It was a child sold to the devil, who cam, and, setting upon my had, drave a nail in, to my grat tarment."

"I should think so!" answered Middle-

mist: "but how came you to see the child? and why did you fancy I sent it?"

"I did not see the child, Sar! at least, whan it did tarment me, for it was by night! bat, by the grace of Gad, a fact cam to my knowledge, that a pious minister was bewitched in that way; and, one night, when the pain in my had came on, I took a knife, and made a stroke at the fiend! and the next day, as I went down by Jo Beeches cattage, I saw a woman weth a child on her knee, by the way side; and the child was sorely cat, and it died the next day after, and then the whole was plain."

"It was plain enough that the child died. I remember the thing very well," said Middlemist: "but it's wound, as I heard the story, was occasioned by a reaping-hook, which the unfortunate mother had left too near the child:" (here Bleathead shook his head) "and, besides, if I remember right, you were relieved

from that pain by blisters on the head!"

"That was astensible; bat the dath of the child was the real!" answered Bleathead.

"Then," continued Middlemist, "granting that the child did nightly bestride your pillow, and drive a tenpenny nail into your skull, which seems to have made a famous resistance, why was I supposed to be the instigator?"

"Na! na! nat by me! nat by me!" replied the Parson;" it was Mestress Blatehad who laid the sen to your door: if I could ever have persuaded myself that you was indeed an agent of the evil-one, I wad have avoided you, and cast off all entercarse; bat, Gad farbed! Gad farbed! a man may know many strange sacrets of nature, and have power over the evil spirits, and angels, and nat be in campact with the evil-one!"

"Well, really, I am obliged to your good opinion, my good neighbour,"

answered Middlemist; "and I promise you, that your skull will never be assailed by my nails! indeed, the devil himself, I should think, would hardly attempt a parson's skull; he knows how sacred its contents are: if I can help Mr. Normanburn, who seems to be in a bad way, I will, to oblige you, do so; and who knows what might be done? but it is almost bed-time."

"Vary true, so it is," cried Bleathead: "what can bay the reason that Mrs. Blatehad das nat send in the sapper? I vow, that I am vary lank; I do want my sapper."

"And by the burning of my taper you have wanted it some time!" answered Middlemist; "I must say good night to you, my good friend."

"Nat so, nat so, my gad friend," cried the parson, who wanted his supper, and who, knowing his wife's habits, suspected, that, if Middlemist went, he should not be able to procure any; "you mast

stay and take your brad and cheese; Gad bless me! I can't think why Mestress Blatehad doth nat cam; I vow that I am prassed with hanger, and vary dry; I want a drink, sedley."

"You'd better call her," said Middlemist: "here, where legitimate authority is preserved, as in a sacred ark, she will hardly refuse to come."

"Na, na, certainly nat!" cried Bleathead; then, going to the door, he called in a pompous authoritative tone, "Mestress Blatehad, I say! breng my sapper, and a candle; Mestress Blatehad, I say!"

The reply to this was the appearance of the lady called with a candle in her hand: she placed it on the table, from which Middlemist took his little box and put it into his pocket. A dead silence prevailed for a minute or two, and was, at last, broken by the husband, who repeated, in rather a lower key, "Mestress Blatehad, is nat sapper caming?"

"Supper?" replied the lady, frowning at him to make him hold his tongue; "I'm sick of supper! supper, indeed! here's been a pretty to do wi't' lads! they've taken stunt, forsooth; and clashed, and clarted all t' porridge about t' walls, just acause t' bishop had set his foot in it; a sign they're better fed than taught; but they shall go to bed wi empty bellies, a week together, for their waste! an then they'll learn that it's no reason, because t' porridge is bishop'd, they should make waste of it. Then there's that gurt fool Dickey Barefoot; such a ninney; to let them rive, and tear his clothes off his back, till he has hardly a rag to cover his nakedness! he thinks, may be, you've got a pair of breeches to fit his posteriors; but, he's mistaken, for you have but two pair, and they're both too good for such a beggarly fout; I'm sure he does not earn his bread, much more his clothes; I wish we was fairly quit of him!

Here the lady paused a moment, and her husband in a gentle voice, said "Wa---wa---wa---what is all this, Mestress Blatehad? If the yang jantleman's sapper was bad, it was Nancy's fault, and they cad nat, they cad nat bay expected to eat it. Mr. Meddlemest here, I have asked to take his sapper weth us, and we are tired of waiting: I desire we may have something to eat."

"Sooner said than done," replied the lady; "it's all the lad's fault you have not had your supper long ago; but here I have been forçed to stand over Nancy while she scraped up t' oatmeal they clarted about; I'm determined they shall have it for breakfast to-morrow morning."

"Na, na, nat so," cried the parson, a little ashamed that Middlemist should hear these economical arrangements: "bat let that bay, let that bay, Mestress Blatehad; and let us have our sapper."

"I don't know there's any thing fit to

eat i't' hoose," answered she; "I've had no time to look; besides, it grows late, and my back aches so wi' my job, I shall be glad to go to bed."

"If that be the case, Madam," said Middlemist, "I'll wish you good night; for I really do not wish for any supper, and have intruded so long, solely for the pleasure of Mr. Bleathead's conversation."

He was then departing; but Bleathead, pressed by hunger, which he knew would get no satisfaction that night, if his visitor departed; and by shame, that the visitor should see so melancholy a confirmation of the triumph of legitimate authority, the mortified Bleathead stopped him, and, to his great surprise, said to the lady in a tone of authority, that Middlemist imagined to be seldom used in that quarter:

"Mestress Blatehad, order my sapper; I will have my sapper!"

Mrs. Bleathead did not think proper to oppose any longer; she rung the bell

with so much fury, that she broke the bell-rope; which was, in fact, nothing more than a piece of common green cord, and not finding that Nancy was ready to make her appearance, she bounced out of the room, muttering, pretty audibly, that she knew some evil would happen, when that conjuring fellow thrust in his nose. To this, Middlemist made no answer; he determined to stay, and see what the parson's order would produce, and that now valiant commander walked about the room with his hands in his breeches pockets; his whole soul in a ferment, from the extraordinary effort he was making, and the dread of that curtain lecture, he knew must be his fate.

But we shall here conclude our chapter, which has run to an extraordinary length, and reserve Mrs. Bleathead and her supper for a treat by itself.

CHAP. VII.

Mrs. Bleathead's Hospitality.—A Lesson to Wives.

FULL ten minutes did the two gentlemen wait in Mr. Bleathead's parlour, before there was any appearance of supper; and, during the whole of that time, not a word was uttered either by the master of the house, or his guest: the former continued to walk about the room, chafing with rage and hunger, and the latter sat by the open window, enjoying the air without, and the scene within. At last, the foot and the tongue of Mrs. Bleathead approached, (not without the rest of her body) and she was followed by Nancy with a tray containing supper, and the necessary accommodations for eating it. The girl, though very dirty, and evidently fatigued, would have taken

the trouble to lay the cloth; but her mistress exclaimed, "Let it be, you bogling thing, you! and clap it down, just as it is! Now, Mr. Middlemest, if you'll come to t' table, you may have your supper."

The only answer Middlemist made was a very low formal bow; and, leaving his place, he seated himself at the table. The parson and his spouse had already done the same, and the former looking at the bone, that the latter honoured with the title of beef, exclaimed,

"Beef! call you this beef, Mestress Blatehad? why, it's nathing at all! nathing at all, bat a bane! there is nat a mouthful apa[illegible] it, as I hope to be saved!"

"Turn it up, Mr. Bleathad, and you'll find some pickings a't' bottom: if folks come wanting their suppers i' this way, at midnight, they mun take what they can get; and we've no butcher meat, but that!" answered the lady.

To this the parson made no answer;

but he turned up the bone, and turned round the bone, and eyed it, and cut at it, till the perspiration ran in huge drops down his face: so little feeling, however, had the bone, that it minded his fierce attacks no more than so many fly-kicks. While he was thus employed, his rage increasing, as every succeeding effort failed, Mrs. Bleathead addressed Middlemist, and asked, whether he would take a slice of cold boiled beef? to which Middlemist answered, "If you please, Ma'am."

"Nay," said she, "it's not if *I* please, I reckon, but if t' parson pleases; I think he means to keep it all to himself; what a time he is!" Middlemist bowed an assent, and Bleathead, who could hold no longer, threw down his knife and fork, and, pushing the dish to his wife, said,

"By the gurt Gad I vow that you are nat bearable, Mestress Blatehad! the bane is as lean as you are! there is nat a meal far a sperrow left upan it! help it if you can!"

"To be sure, I can," said the lady, "and so might you, if you'd a bit more patience! you would not like much, Mr. Middlemist, may be?" Middlemist only bowed.

With wonderful patience and perseverance his hostess began to scrape the bone, while her husband fell upon the bread, consisting of two small pieces, and, in a twinkling, swallowed them both, along with a lettuce that now made its appearance. This Mrs. Bleathead did not observe, for she was busily employed, and it required all her skill in skinning and scraping to collect a few scraps, which, when assembled, she offered to Middlemist, saying: "There's but a morsel, Sir! may be you'd like a bit more?" Again Middlemist bowed his assent, and the plate remained half way between him and the lady. She was, with a very sour aspect, resuming her toils, when, casting her eye towards her husband, she perceived the devastation he had made,

and, dropping her knife and fork, she cried:

"Yau greedy brute, you! if you have not gobbled up all t' bread, and that nice lettuce, too! If ever I see any thing so rude and ill bred in my life!"

"Gurt Gad of Haven!" exclaimed Bleathead, "when my bally is empty, and I can't gat a marsel to fill it, in my own hawse, too! to talk of rude, and ellbred? et's enough to drive me mad! bat, Madam! I mast heve samething to yeat! I mast! I mast! so order in samething else."

"We have nothing else," said the wife; "this is all we have cooked, and somebody must go without a dinner to-morrow, for your hunger to night. There, Mr. what's your name, will that do?" pushing the plate towards him.

Middlemist bowed, placed his plate before him, and arranged his knife and fork, but he did not offer to eat; he waited the termination of the scene in silence.

To do Mr. Bleathead justice, independently of the personal suffering, he really was ashamed of the whole, and it required a particular degree of self command to forbear uttering words, which he thought, properly enough, would be unbecoming from the mouth of a clergyman. He, however, rose, and calling Nancy, asked if there was any other meat in the house? to which Nancy answered, "Yes, but t' mistress had t' key! she wished she would let her have some to her supper." Bleathead was about to expostulate; but his wife was beforehand with him, and reproached him so bitterly for not believing her, and taking her word, that she silenced him: then, vowing that every word she said was true, she appealed to Middlemist, and asked, if he did not think her true? "Yes, to the *bone!*" answered he, fixing his eyes on the poor beef bone.

The lady either did not, or did not

seem to understand him, and she again addressed her husband.

"There, you see, Mr. Middlemist knows I'm true! and he's a sort of conjuror, too. Come, why don't you yeat your supper, Mr. Middlemist? Here, parson, you may carve for yourself."

"I'll have some cheese and brad," said the parson.

"There's none i' t' hoose," answered the wife.

"There's more brad! I'll have brad and batter!" cried the husband.

"Well, if ever I see so unreasonable a man i' my life," cried the wife, "here, when he's good beef afore him, and can't be content!"

"Look ye, Mestress Blatehad," exclaimed the husband, raising his voice, and one fist clenched, "look ye! I know you cad sken a fle[illegible]! I know you cad, bat, by the gurt Gad, you shell nat sken me! Lat me have some brandy and watter!"

"What, at this time o' night?" said she, still standing her ground, "no! no! I'll have none o' your debaucheries, here! you may go to your minxes to drink your spirits."

This hint, which one would have imagined calculated to enrage the parson, had a contrary effect, he puffed furiously, and pushed up his wig, and pulled it down again, and strode backward and forward, and then, addressing Middlemist, who sat like a statue, the plate still before him, he said:

"Wad nat *you* like sam brendy, Sar?"

"If you please, Sir," answered Middlemist, who began to pity the parson's case.

Mrs. Bleathead was now under the necessity of leaving the room for the brandy bottle, which she did with a very bad grace, and muttering that those who would not eat, should not drink. The lady and the bottle at length returned, and a jug of water, that had been in-

tended for the sole beverage, was placed on the table: without saying a word, Middlemist, by whom the bottle was placed, pushed away his plate, and mixed a pretty strong glass of brandy and water, and the parson was about to do the same, having seated himself for that purpose, when his lady snatched away the bottle, and said, brandy always made him feverish! This last disappointment was more than the patience of Bleathead could bear; he started up in a fury, and snatching the beef bone, he hurled it with admirable effect, and a tremendous oath, at his wife's head, and, to this day, the unfortunate woman bears upon her nose the marks of her husband's prowess. At the time, she fell prostrate, and Middlemist, seeing the turn things had taken, and having had a sufficient treat of the kind, made his exit, before either the husband or wife had time to think of him; leaving the glass of brandy and water to be swallowed by the victor, who did not

neglect the happy occasion. However unfortunate and unfavourable these occurrences may seem, they had rather a good effect at the rectory; for the husband, using his victory as a man of sense would use it, obtained a remission for his *models of gentlemanly behaviour* from the twice cooked oatmeal, and, for some reason or other, no notice was taken of the attack on Dicky Barefoot; nay, we have even heard it rumored, that the fatal apples (what mischief have not apples occasioned!) the primary cause of the uproar, were restored to the community. Whether this was, or was not really the case, we do not pretend to determine, for our own parts, we have some heterodox doubts on the subject; but one thing is certain, videlicet, that, on account of the care her nose required, Mrs. Bleathead was prevented from giving her husband the lecture he so well deserved that evening, and that, no sooner was his head laid on the pillow, than he fell into a

sound sleep, to which, no doubt, his brandy and water contributed its full share. Mrs. Bleathead was not so fortunate; pain and grief keept her awake, and she did not fail to attribute all that had passed, to the malign influence of conjuror Middlemist, who took care not to visit the rectory again in haste.

END OF BOOK II.

BOOK III.

CHAP. I.

How to lay a Spirit.—A learned Discourse on Possession, Witchcraft, &c.—A Hoof and a Claw.—A happy Deliverance.—Confession.—The Danger of carnal Indulgence.

We have dedicated a considerable portion of our pages to Mr. Bleathead and his economical wife, being anxious that our readers should know (and that not superficially) the man, whose conversation, and ghostly counsel contributed to alleviate the woes of poor Mr. Normanburn, who from this time frequently admitted his new friend to a private conference. To own the truth, Mr. Bleathead became by degrees so neces-

sary to Mr. Normanburn, that he could not live without him; nor will any body, who has experienced the misery consequent on such a visitation, as that which afflicted the unfortunate gentleman, wonder that it should be so.

Not more than a fortnight had elapsed from that visit we last commemorated, before, at the recommendation of Bleathead, Mr. Middlemist was invited to Purlbeck; and, at his intercession, that gentleman accepted the invitation; in truth, he was gratified by the request.

The history of Mr. Normanburn and his family had never ceased to be a subject of considerable interest in the country, and particularly about the immediate neighbourhood, where the circumstances we have recorded happened; and where the rightful heirs of the property were living in unmerited indigence, while the ostensible one was in the full possession of a more than comfortable competency.

Mr. Middlemist, though an oddity, and a philosopher, could not so far divest himself of interest for his neighbours, but that his heart swelled with indignation at the thought of their fate; and he had often wished that the peculiar habits of Mr. Normanburn had not been a direct prohibition to all attempts at communication with him. It was then with particular pleasure that he attended his reverend neighbour to Purlbeck; and having received from that worthy gentleman a hint or two respecting what was wished for from him, he prepared to act in concert with those who sought his society, and hoped that by at first humoring their whims, he might gain so far upon their good opinion, as to be eventually of real use to them.

He was received by Mr. Normanburn with civility, and the unobtrusiveness of his manners rendered that poor invalid more easy than he would have been with

a less quiet stranger. After some few unmeaning half sentences, Mr. Bleat-head opened the business on which they were met, in these words.

"My warthy friend, Squire Narman-bairn, Sar, hes wished to cansalt you re-specting the most efficacious manner of daling with thes hare sperit. Far my own part, I canfess, that I think prayer! gad, sound, arthadox prayer, sich as we read was used in old time, is the mast affi-cacious! whather it bay the partarbed saul of the departed, gad lady, Mestress Narmanbairn, or sam gablin raised by the evil one, through sam malicious wetch in the neighbourhood! Bat before we dale with it at all, we wesh to heve your opinion, as we know you are canning in all menner of devices, and deeply, yas, deeply rad in the secrets of nature! yas, surely, bat I hope and believe nat anlaw-fully."

Here the speaker paused, and Middle-

mist with a very serious countenance and great solemnity of manner, turning to Mr. Normanburn, said:

"Whatever knowledge I may have gained by deep research and laborious investigation, is entirely at the service of yourself, or any of your family, Sir; but in hands like those of Mr. Bleathead, a man!—but I would seem not to flatter; all I can suggest must be vain indeed!"

This modest speech exceedingly gratified Mr. Middlemist's companions, and raised him in their opinion many degrees higher than he had stood before; and they still remaining silent, he proceeded to enquire of Mr. Normanburn how he was afflicted. The poor man underwent great agitation, while he related how, when, and where his mother's spirit, or some demon in her likeness, had appeared to him: he had often, he said, tried to speak to it, but in vain! the moment he made the effort the spirit frowned horribly upon him, and chilled his blood with

fear! He had however found, that it avoided at the sound of a bell, and this made him imagine that it was a demon, rather than a ghost, as it was well known, those evil ones could not come where a bell rung.

"Vary true! vary true! that obsarvation sheweth gurt knowledge in the speritual kingdom, Sar, " cried Bleathead:" wad nat the devil that reballious sperit make a prey of the dad, if the bell ded nat knoll? oh! that arch one doth hate a bell!"

"So I find!" said Normanburn with a sigh: "and now, Mr. Middlemist, the point is this: do you think prayer alone should be used? or—or—any other means—in which, I fancy, you—are—*learned!*"

"In these cases," answered Middlemist, "there may be various methods of proceeding, and all perhaps efficacious. The proper thing, I should think, would be for our pious friend here to command the spirit in the name of God to become vi-

sible to *him*, and then to question it; he can be at no loss for words sufficiently powerful to compel it to attend to, and answer him!"

"That was what I wished! but Mr. Bleathead does not seem to approve it," said Mr. Normanburn, "and his dislike to meddle with it has induced me to seek further counsel. "Na! na! nat to speak without counsel, Sar, I do nat like presamption, I wad not presume!" cried Bleathead.

"It is no presumption in a man of your sacred character to speak to, and controul the beings of another world, whether good or bad!" said Middlemist: "you will do it, and effectually too, in the name of Christ."

"Na, na, nat so," cried Bleathead; "it may be above my power." "Not if your Faith be whole," replied Middlemist, "and that it is, I doubt not! Faith will do greater things than these! You, Sir,

are the proper man to face the phantom, and I am clearly for your invoking it, or calling it forth; interrogating it, and finally dispatching it to the place where it ought to dwell!"

"Gad Lard! Gad Lard!" cried Bleathead; what? what? I face the phentom?"

"Certainly, Sir," answered Middlemist: "you know how efficacious prayer hath been in all times, and even in these our own times! It is not so long since the demon of Tedworth played his pranks! and were not the clergy summoned to pray? that is the legal mean!"

"Bat, Sar! bat, Sar!" cried Bleathead, "if you are a true man, you may face the phentam as well as me."

"Certainly!" answered Middlemist, "I should not object to that, but I have not the requisite sanctity to *control* it. It might refuse to be visible to my organs!"

"Nat so! nat so! if—if—you, exhart-

ed it praperly. Wad it nat be advisable, thenk you, to try sam *other means?*" said Bleathead.

"That there are other means, and those not unlawful, we learn from the history of Tobit," said Middlemist.

"Aye! *that* I have often studied!" said Mr. Normanburn.

"And a vary gad and pious and instractive book the book of Tobit is," said Bleathead. "I have often regratted that it is deemed aprochypall! It is a pity! far, certainly, there is nathing that melitates again sound piety and gadliness in that interesting story."

"Certainly nothing!" cried Normanburn; and if the age of miracles was not past! but—"

"I do not see myself, if the age of possession be not past, why the age of miracles should," replied Middlemist. "The Romish church retains them, and we have even now frequent and well-

authenticated accounts of miracles openly performed!"

"Aye! all popish jaggles! popish jaggles!" interrupted the churchman; "and I wander to hare a man of your research advance sach a thing."

"It may be juggling," answered his friend, coolly, "but if you admit that there is possession and witchcraft, I do not see why there should not be miracles too! for it can hardly be supposed that God would let the evil spirits range and perform various feats unrestrained (which we know on the best proof,) and fetter the good spirit! and there is nothing in Scripture, as far as my research goes at least, to warrant the doctrine that miracles were to cease with Christ. But this is a point I would not contest with so learned a theologian as Mr. Bleathead. I do think, however; but no matter! my thoughts are—no matter!"

His two companions, who equally long-

ed to know what he thought; the one, that he might find some method to quiet his troublesome attendant, and the other, that he might avoid being driven to compel the spirit to become visible, now pressed Middlemist to unbosom himself to them, and after some entreaties, which he heard in silence, he spoke thus:

"Why, gentlemen, my thoughts are, that if the same sort of fish could be found, whose liver was so useful to Tobit, the same happy results might be produced; and the smoke might so offend this spirit or demon (my opinion leans towards the latter) that Mr. Normanburn might be effectually relieved from its visitations."

"Yas, yas! vary true! and then—I shad nat need to cammand it to be vesible to *me!*" cried Bleathead.

"On the contrary," returned Middlemist, "your interference becomes the more necessary; as if it should really be no demon, but the troubled spirit of the deceased, the smoke would not be want-

ed. You ought to use the means the church allows in addressing it, and drawing from it the cause of its appearance: and, as it is not improbable that it may be near the time of its visit, the sooner the better."

"Na! na! Lat us consider; lat us cansider! do nathing reshly!" cried the parson, shaking from head to foot. Middlemist, pretending not to see him, asked Mr. Normanburn if it was about the time the ghost usually came? who answered in the affirmative, adding, that it always appeared in one corner of the room, *that* where Mr. Bleathead was now sitting. Such news was by no means agreeable to Mr. Bleathead, who started suddenly from his chair, and, in so doing, stepped back with his right foot, which, to his great horror was as suddenly invaded by what he believed to be the teeth or claws of a demon: something seized him by the ancle, and so terrified him, that he fell down on his knees, and commenced a

most fervent prayer. Mr. Normanburn, covering his face, joined in his ejaculations, and Middlemist examined to discover what the assailant might be: he perceived in the corner a cat, which doubtless, had been the aggressor, and which now leaped from her cover, and made her exit through the window, unseen by any but himself. He took care not to communicate his discovery to the two devotees, nor to interrupt them, but waited till they should come to themselves.

It was not very long before the prayer ceased, and Mr. Normanburn then went to assist his friend to rise; a good office, very needful to that reverend gentleman, whose leg was rather painful. On examination, it was found to be torn by what he believed to be the claws of a devil, and the thought striking him that it was probable Dr. Stunt had no drugs sufficiently powerful to reach an ill produced by such means, he wept like a child, la-

menting that he had entered what he called the accursed land. Middlemist said not a word; he was malicious enough to enjoy the poor man's terrors, and the efforts Mr. Normanburn made to reason with, and console him, served to heighten the amusement.

At length, it struck him that this incident might probably be turned to the advantage of Mr. Normanburn, who was evidently labouring under all the horrors of a nervous disease, and he asked Bleathead if he did not hear a mighty rushing immediately after the devil seized his leg? Bleathead answered in the affirmative, and Mr. Normanburn himself averred that it was a very extraordinary movement.

"I am convinced," said Middlemist, "and I speak not from conjecture, but from certainty; no matter how made certain, that this apparently sinister accident, is one of the most fortunate things in the world."

"Nat so, nat so!" cried Bleathead,

blubbering, "it cannot bay fartnit; I shall mast likely loose my leg; mast likely: Oh dear, oh!"

"Against that I will by my skill insure you, my good friend!" said Middlemist, "if I may be allowed to prepare a little elixir! Do you permit me, Sir?" Mr. Normanburn replied, "Gladly!" and Middlemist going down stairs, got a little brandy from Mrs. Glassington's cupboard, and a bit of rag from Mabella's bag, and thus furnished, he returned to his companions, dressed the leg of the weeping priest, whose tears increased when he felt the smarting pain of his diabolical wounds, and all being restored to peace, he addressed Mr. Normanburn in this manner.

"I believe, Sir, I may now congratulate you on an extraordinary deliverance; a release from a persecution, that must have been grievous, as well as long to you, but which, I am persuaded, is past to return no more."

"Good God!" exclaimed Normanburn, "what do you say, Sir?" "What I believe," returned Middlemist, seriously; "it appears to me that the devil, for doubtless it was the devil, finding by his art that he must certainly be sore discomfited by this holy man, and feeling himself pressed, even by his presence, hath given up the design, whatever it was, with respect to you, and wreaking the last effort of his malignity and revenge on him who should banish him, has bid adieu to his plot and this house. I heard a mighty rushing when the attack had been made, as, I believe, you did; and, if necessary, I could depose that I saw a claw and a tail."

"Yas, yas! and I felt it!" cried Bleathead, still weeping: "my leg is very painful; very indeed."

"I am sorry, Sir," said Normanburn, "that the enemy should have attacked you in this way; but, should the event

prove as this gentleman has asserted, your brotherly love and christian charity must reconcile you to being a sufferer."

"Oh! my leg!" cried Bleathead. "Console yourself, my good Sir, for your wound," said Middlemist, "by the pleasing reflection that the very intention to talk with the devil, on your part, has had such an effect on that spirit of darkness, that he was compelled to flee from the place where your sacred person was placed!"

"Oh my leg!" cried Bleathead.

"And I venture to prophecy that he will not speedily return! whenever he does, Mr. Normanburn, you have nothing to do, but to send for Mr. Bleathead, and let him stand like Moses in the gap," said Middlemist.

"Na! nat so! nat so!" roared Bleathead; "why should I stand in the gape?"

"Merely because you are a holy man, and there seems to be great virtue in your

person, so that even the very devils flee from you," answered his friend.

"Ha! cried the enraged Bleathead, "bat they tear me first! Oh! my leg!"

"That the fiend fled from you I am certain!" said Middlemist, "and therefore it is almost, nay quite certain, that there is virtue in your person! but perhaps the reason why he had any power over you might be on account of some carnal frailty?"

Bleathead here betrayed much emotion, and uttered a stifled groan, which his friend pretending not to observe, went on. "Perhaps some lapse from virtue may have given the evil one the advantage to annoy! if so, I should think that perfect purity in future might render you invulnerable to all his attacks!" Again Bleathead groaned, looking at the same time very foolish. "What makes me think of this," continued Middlemist, "is a story I heard not long ago about

a young woman called Sally Potter! Do you know her, Mr Bleathead?"

"Yas! yas!" groaned Bleathead.

"What carnally?" said his interrogator.

"Gurt Gad!" exclaimed Bleathead, stamping unadvisedly with his lame foot, "gurt Gad! what can the curnal knowledge of Sally Patter have to do with this damon?"

"A great deal!" answered his friend: "it is such lapses, that expose the best and most pious men to the evil one! What was the snare into which David, the chosen of the Lord, and the man after God's own heart fell? and how was it punished? If, therefore, you have fallen, may not this rending of the demon be as a punishment to you? may not Sally Potter, or some other frail Bathsheba be the cause?"

Bleathead made no reply to this, but he made wry faces, and wiped his mouth, and his relentless persecutor, who knew

very well that Sally Potter had occasioned more than one debate in the Parson's family, did not relax from his attack. He was seconded admirably, by Mr. Normanburn, who, supposing that he spoke seriously, and from a religious motive, joined him in exhorting the aggrieved Bleathead not to expose himself, in future, to lose the advantage the holiness of his character, and his sacred profession gave him over spirits, and demons, by suffering the carnal man to triumph over the spiritual one; and, at the same time, regretting that one lapse should have occasioned him such a misfortune, as he had suffered there.

"Gurt Gad!" exclaimed Bleathead, "did I canfess a lapse? wad it be likely that I shad go to gat curnel knowledge of one of my own parishoners, or to salace myself in the arms of a Bethsheeba? Na! na! it is nat to bay sapposed! and I shall nat never lat sach a thing gat wind."

"Whether you will *let* it get wind or not," answered Middlemist, "I fancy has but little to do with it, for the devil, it seems, has found some hole in your coat, or he would hardly have dared to seize you by the heel, as he has done; and, to tell you the truth, Mr. Bleathead, the whole country rings with malicious reports on the subject. I hope, as they are denied by you, they will not come to the ears of Mrs. Bleathead; who, though a very mild gentle creature, might have her ire roused by such stories: but, however, it's no business of mine!"

"Gurt Gad!" cried Bleathead, "why, what can the wecked world say of me, and that innocent maiden, Sally Patter? I tak Gad to witness the whole ariseth fram a small mistake, that happened last May." "Aye May—so it was!" said Middlemist; "and in her father Joe Potter's barn! I remember the day perfectly!"

"It was a vary beautiful evening, Sar,"

said Bleathead, speaking eagerly in his own defence; "and I was taking a refrashing walk down the shady lane called Lav Lane, which ladeth to the farm of Joe Patter. I tak Gad to wetness, I had no curnel desires, for I was meditating on a sabject far my next discourse, when I saw the lass, Sally, culling simples by the way!"

"And a very nice, plump, rosy, simple subject she was then," said Middlemist: of this Bleathead took no notice, but went on.

"Wall, Sar! in the character of the pester of my flack, I cad do no less bat lat the lass see I notished her, and, as she drapped me a very respactful curtsey, I chucked her under the chen! a very innocent and paternal mode of salutation!"

"Yes!" said Middlemist, "and a proper preliminary to the kiss of love! But pray go on, Sir."

"Well, Sar," continued Bleathead,

the lass was mightily pleased weth the notish I took, of her, and I holped her to camplete her callection, and, as she seemed samwhat wary, I carried her besket far her, seasoning the walk with sach descourse, as was bayfitting the occasion. We had nat gan fur, when the poor girl sat her foot on a rolling stone, and so hart har ancle, thet I was farced, out of mare humanity, to sappart her, and though her madesty made her a little reluctant at first, she was, at last, glad to accept my holp."

"Aye! your'e a Lothario!" said Middlemist in an undertone: of this Bleathead took no notice; he went on.

"Sar, in this sitiation, some enemy to the church saw us, and when I caudacted the lass into the barn, where I staid to gev her a ward of exhortation and advice, seeing she is a tempting lure to the yang fallows, thes enemy, fallowing the canceits of a filthy imagination, assarted that I was nought with har! Gad

knoweth the truth, Sar! yas, he knoweth my acts! he knoweth my acts!"

"It seems that the devil knows them too, sir!" answered Middlemist, "and your word of exhortation has succeeded so well, that Sally's old sweetheart, Dick Clegg, has forsaken her, and the poor girl herself has exchanged her rosy complexion for a very sallow one, which the gossips of the village say, will, in due time, certainly produce a little Preacher!"

Middlemist here paused, for he perceived that his host was somewhat annoyed, as well as his old neighbour, by the subject, and in order to restore all to comfort, he reverted to that of spirits, by observing, that there were many strange relations of tricks played, either by the devil or his agents, and that the impunity they now enjoyed, since the laws against witchcraft were a dead letter, was, he feared, but too well calculated to increase the mischief. He

had by this observation opened the door to a field of discussion, in which Bleathead, from having read all the books that came in his way on that subject, was calculated to shine: he entered at once upon it, and related many marvellous acts of witches, he had himself known, and of confessions made by others some few years back, when it was the fashion to burn these gentlewomen at the stake. He lamented, right bitterly, that this wholesome and orthodox punishment should have been laid aside; and to the astonishment of Middlemist, who had never even in the pulpit heard him so eloquent, and to the delight of Normanburn, who found him a mine of learning, he continued in these words.

CHAP. II.

In which Mr. Bleathead shews his great Learning.—What Nervous Disorders really are.—How to ride Sixteen at a Time.—An Amendment.

You may depend upan it, Sars, that them that proposed to let thase wecked hegs go on in impunity, was the greatest enemies to the charch, that she ever had. Yas, Gad knows, and I know, if sach wholesome laws had been in farce, I myself cad have delivered to the sacular arm, more then one servant of the devil. It's nat to tell, it's nat to tell, what canfessions I heve hard from that old heg, Dally Craw! She hath told me things, that was canvincing; yes, canvincing: and yet, she died in her bed, at the age of fourscore, na langer ago than last May."

"Aye!" interrupted Middlemist, "May!

May is a trying month." Of this Bleathead took no notice, but full of his subject went on.

"That heg canfessed to me, Sar, that she had sold herself to the devil! you stare, Mester Meddlemest, bat she did; and, moreover, I charged her with being the cause, that Martin Nethersole's lad hed sich terrible fets, terrible indeed; and I asked her, if she did it by means of giving the led some devil-apple to eat? and the heg owned that it was! and when the woman was hanged at Yurk for having gane a little too fur in her necromancy, for she had poisoned her customers, Dally said, she wad mount her broomstick, and see her death, and there wad be plenty more, as active as she was."

"There are many curious accounts," said Mr. Normanburn, "respecting the conveyance of witches from place to place, and the facility with which they

pass through key holes, and other small places."

"The broomstick, however, by Mr. Bleathead's account, seems to be the favourite conveyance, when they do not ride men or animals," said Middlemist.

"Is it common for them to ride men?" asked Mr. Normanburn.

"Vary, vary cammon, indeed," said Bleathead; "and those thus vesited, are brought to death's door by the journeys they are campelled, unknown to themsalves, to take. Why, Sar, there is many and many camplaints, Dactor Stant calls narvish, is nathing more nar less, then being heg-redden!"

"Do you think so?" said Normanburn, changing colour; "how are they affected?"

Middlemist would have been glad to interpose here, to prevent Bleathead from going on, for he perceived, that if Mr. Normanburn should find himself relieved

from the ghost, he would get a witch in exchange; but it was too late! Bleathead was now in his element, and if he were even stopped, he would afterwards resume the subject; he did not, therefore, attempt to interrupt him, but awaited in silence to hear what stroke of absurdity would come next. To Mr. Normanburn's question, Bleathead answered thus:

" Far the most part, Sar, they awake in the marning with their limbs all aching, and feeling shaken, as if they had been jarneying many miles: then they are all in a sweat fram the hard exercise which hath made them nigh to sound; their head doth beat, and thomp, and the light is painful to their eyes."

" I am often so," said Normanburn.

" That is not at all improbable," cried Middlemist, (interrupting Bleathead, who had lifted up his hands and his eyes, and was about to utter) " I think, Sir, you must long have suffered from nervous ir-

ritability, and this with the slow fever often, if not always, attendant on such a state of body, will produce exactly what our pious friend here has described."

"Do you think so?" asked the poor invalid. "Indeed, I do, Sir," said Middlemist, "and I am in great hopes that now you are recovering a little tone, and have got rid of the ghost, you will sleep better than you have done; at any rate, you may be assured, that in this age you will not be witch-ridden! it is too late for that, even in the wilds of Yorkshire."

While this opinion so freely given seemed to afford some consolation to the infirm Mr. Normanburn, it roused the ire of Bleathead, who found in it a direct contradiction to his own favourite and orthodox opinions, which, he maintained, had been approved and verified in the first ages of the church by the very apostles themselves, who exerted their divine power to suppress sorcerers and wizards; which had met with the strong-

est confirmation in after ages, and almost down to our own times, by wise and energetic laws against witchcraft, and leaguers with the devil; and which he had quite been satisfied in, by inquiries in his own neighbourhood. He sat a few seconds, as if collecting breath to speak, and then burst forth as follows:

"Gad Lard! can it bay passible I hare sich blaspheemous language! Lat me tell you, Sar, that it is nat too late to be heg-redden now, any more than a handred years since! no, Sar! and I have myself been redden! aye, and sorely too: and I have a yang gantleman in my school, who hath all the symptoms of being taken to those infarnal meetings and feasts, that the devil provides for his slaves; bat I cannat make the poor child canfess, far I find that his memory is impaired by the hard usage he sastains. I sappose, Sar, you wad believe what you saw, Sar?" looking angrily at Middlemist.

"Not always, Sir," said Middlemist. "If, indeed, I saw the witch ride off with the young gentleman—but how does she carry him? astride her broom-stick?"

"That I know nat, I know nat; I wish I did!" answered Bleathead, with a "groan; there is sach variety of ways; sach variety! I sappase you have read that interesting account of the proceedings of the Royal Commissioners in Sweden! authentic beyond doubt: yas, beyond doubt, yas! there the children were carried aff, sixteen at a time, to the great divan."

"Sixteen at a time?" said Normanburn, "good God! but how did they carry them?"

"Why, Sar, by the canfassion of the wetches themselves, it appears, that whan they rade on a goat, which they aften ded; yas, vary aften, they clapped a spit or sam sach instrument into the b—k s—e of the animal, so that there was

ample room far all the cheldren they took behind them."

This was delivered in a solemn and affecting tone; but it had so ludicrous an effect, that Mr. Middlemist with difficulty preserved his gravity, and Mr. Normanburn looked, as if he did not know whether to believe the account or not; luckily for all parties, the conversation was put an end to by a messenger from Mrs. Bleathead, to summon her husband on some professional business; and Middlemist accompanied him home.

From this time Mr. Middlemist became intimate with both the Captain and Mrs. Glassington, and no days passed so agreeably at Purlbeck, as those on which he visited it. As to Mr. Normanburn, he was so far relieved, that sometimes weeks passed without bringing him any supernatural visitation, and, perhaps, as he more frequently conversed with his family, he might have had an entire cure, if his frequent conferences with Bleathead had

not kept his fancies alive. That good man, spite of his fears and his habit of body, was not long before he found himself sound and whole again, at which he wondered greatly, as he had imagined the devil's claw must be peculiarly venomous.

CHAP. III.

A Return to our Heroine.—Middlemist's Insensibility.—Fifteen, and a Peep at Futurity.—A Birth-Day.—Obstinacy.

THE occupations and amusements of the family at Purlbeck Cottage were, as the reader may by this time have guessed, of a very confined and humble nature, and their circumstances forbade them to hope for any change that might vary them. Weeks, months, and years succeeded each other, and found them passing their time in a similar way; Mr. Normanburn discussing deep subjects with his pastor; the Captain talking politics, and satirizing his neighbours with Middlemist; Mrs. Glassington dividing her time between her domestic employments, her toilet, and the agreeable company of Mrs. Bleathead, with whom she

contracted a great intimacy; and Mabella by turns exercising her skill in the kitchen, on the furniture, in the garden, or at her needle. When she had done what was necessary in these several departments, and amused herself with her books, in which she took great delight, she used to ramble through the fields, woods, and lanes, and sometimes to ascend the hills, and enjoy the rich prospects, so beautiful, and so various, which that country affords.

This sort of life, so different to that to which most young ladies of her age are accustomed, strengthened her frame, and gave her an independence of mind, and a flow of spirits, that would have degenerated into rudeness and obstinacy, if they had not been qualified by a natural gentleness and sweetness of disposition, which endeared her to all her relatives. Indeed, under a more refined and less strengthening system, the pliancy and tenderness of her heart might have sunk

into sickly sentimentality; and in that case, she would have been very unfit to perform the duties of life, or to sustain such trials as fall to the lot of most women, whether married or single.

Before she was fourteen she knew every pleasant ramble, fine view, and interesting spot within three miles of the cottage; and as her uncle could not, and her father and her aunt would not walk, she invariably visited them alone. Mud, rain, and other disagreeables she did not despise, for she thought not of them; her shoes were thick, her hat large and weather beaten, and her other garments of a coarse kind, easily cleaned, and not easily spoiled. Sometimes, her aunt took her with her to Mr. Bleathead's; but Mabella soon tired of these visits, for, during a great part of them, she was left to amuse herself with her work in the parlour, while her aunt and Mrs. Bleathead were looking over the numerous (we had almost said innumerable) gowns, caps,

habit shirts, frills, and other articles of female apparel, which that good lady had in store.

Mrs. Bleathead piqued herself, and not without reason, on her economy, and her other favourite passion being dress, she thought that she could happily unite both. To effect this, she regularly purchased her summer and her winter fashions, as she called them, and, often without having once had occasion to wear them, she deposited them safely in a large trunk kept for the purpose. The reader must not, however, imagine that she had but one trunk of these precious treasures! she had several; and so admirable was the order she preserved, that she could go at once to that which contained the fashion of such a season.

It was over these treasures that Mrs. Glassington hung delighted, and over these treasures that Mrs. Bleathead, no less delighted, would talk by the hour together. She was pleased to shew them,

to tell how much they cost, how long she was talking to the dealer to get sixpence '*bated* on such or such a cap, or frill, and what great ladies in the county had gowns made at the same place, and of the same pattern. Amidst all her harangues, however, it never once occurred to her, to make a present to her visitor of any of them, though perfectly useless to herself, and all the advantage Mrs. Glassington derived, besides the information above-mentioned, was permission to copy any of them on the spot, a permission she by no means neglected. While engaged in this delightful way, Mrs. Glassington forgot Mabella, and the poor child was as glad to escape from a Burnthwaite visit, as she had at first been eager to be indulged with one.

The reader may, perhaps, be surprised that a woman in the situation of Mrs. Glassington, who had no changes of society, and certainly no critics in dress about her, should think it worth her while

to take so much trouble, and so many long walks, and waste so many hours about decorating her person! and, indeed, it does seem wonderful, all things considered, that she should. But the fact was, that Mrs. Glassington not only loved to be dressed, but she liked the act of dressing, and preparing her dress; and, besides, she thought very justly, that as she should soon begin to lose somewhat of her youthful appearance, dress might in a great measure prevent the loss from being discovered. Then Mrs. Glassington was a coquet, at heart! she sighed for admiration, and she was gratified even with the exclamation of Bleathead, of, "Gad taste, gad taste, I do aver! vary pratty! vary pratty! Mistress Blatehad, why don't you pat on a gown like that?"* She hoped, too, to attract the attention of Middlemist, upon whom she certainly had some design; but she always found her little attempts fail of their effect, for to all her lures of dress and conversation

he was blind and deaf, and even when referred to for, a decision between one sort of shape or trimming and another, he would say that he saw no difference.

Any other woman would have been discouraged; but it was a maxim with Mrs. Glassington, that all men were led by women, and that no man could withstand constant intercourse, and constant attention to the proprieties of life; she was sure, if there was no previous attachment, that an union must be the result. She acted on this opinion, and sometimes flattered herself that she began to make an impression on the wise man, as she called him; but such fancies were soon destroyed again, and she found herself exactly where she had set out. Yet she was not discouraged; she thought that Middlemist must have some fortune; he was certainly not a vulgar man, and the old Proverb says, "Constant dropping will wear a stone." Middlemist, however, was harder than stone, for he re-

mained unworn, and when Mabella had reached her fifteenth birth-day, her aunt was, with respect to him, just where she began.

On the morning of that day, Mabella carried up her papa's breakfast, as usual, and found him sitting up in bed, reading attentively. As he was very absent, and forgetful, she was afraid he might omit to eat his breakfast, and yet she did not like to disturb him. She waited sometime expecting he would speak to her, but he was so completely absorbed in his subject, that he did not know she was in the room. At last, her little stock of patience being worn out, she addressed him thus: "Papa, your breakfast will be cold! will you have it in bed?"

"No, my dear!" replied he, throwing back the bed-clothes, "I'll get up." He then was about to step out on the floor; but Mabella exclaimed, "Dear papa, let me get out of the room, and I'll bring you some more warm tea, when

you are dressed." This restored Mr. Normanburn's recollection, and seeing the impropriety of his proceeding, he retreated again under cover, and asked Mabella, rather sternly, what made her loiter in his room to plague him?

"I beg pardon, papa, for staying," replied she, "but it is my birth-day, and I want you to kiss me!"

"You are a foolish child, Mab," said he: "how old are you to-day?"

"Fifteen, my aunt says," answered Mabella; "and do you know, I have grown an inch and a half since last birth-day. My uncle has measured me; he calls me a May-pole! Now, do you think, I'm so like a May-pole, papa? I'm not so very tall!"

Mr. Normanburn was by this time pretty deeply engaged in his breakfast, and, having shut his book, in order to eat the toast more at leisure, he had an opportunity of observing his daughter's

person, a thing he had never before thought of.

"Why, really," said he, as soon as his mouth was empty, "you are grown quite a woman, child! I had no notion you had shot up in this way! I wish——" He paused here with a look of more meaning than was usual, and Mabella waited sometime, hoping that he would finish his sentence. But this hope was vain; for mouthful after mouthful was swallowed, and he did not explain what he wished.

"What do you wish, papa?" said she, at last; "any thing I can do for you?"

"No!" said the father, mournfully; "only my old wish! that you were, as you ought to be, mistress of Normanburn."

This produced a scene of tenderness between the father and daughter, the one living over again the wrongs of his family, and the other comforting him, by assuring him, that she was perfectly happy, and

did not wish for any thing in the world. And in this Mabella was quite sincere, as far as regarded herself, for she had not yet learnt to sigh for fictitious pleasures; as to her father, indeed, she often wished that he was more chearful, and, with respect to her uncle and aunt, she was sorry the one could not walk, and the other could not have all the variety of things she heard her long for.

When she went down stairs she repeated to her aunt what had passed with her papa, and Mrs. Glassington felt all her resentment against her grandmother, her sorrow, and her regrets revive with great force: she talked loudly, and she talked long, of the hardships she herself had laboured under, and of the mortifications, to which the want of a proper introduction into life had subjected her: she then compared Mabella's case with her own, and, at last, concluded by declaring, that it was a shame to bury such a girl, and with such ancient and

pure blood in her veins, in a miserable hole like Purlbeck.

"The truth is, my dear," said she, "that I repent having buried myself here, the last five years! here, where one never sees a decent man, except Middlemist, and he's but a queer impenetrable creature. It does not signify! but my brother must contrive to save, and let us go to York races. You are big enough, now, to come out, and a girl with your face and person ought to make your fortune, though your abominable old grandmother marred it. You are very like me, child! just what I was at fifteen! and, if I had known as well then, as now, how I looked, I promise you I should have done better than I did. However, one may do better a second time, perhaps; we must go to the races."

"And what shall we do there, aunt?" asked Mabella.

"Get husbands, to be sure," answered Mrs. Glassington; then recollecting her-

self, she added, "No! no! I was only in jest! but come, mix your plum pudding, and get it in—it won't be so good as it used to be on your birth-day! but that is not my fault: every thing's so dear, one can hardly now have a pudding without plums."

It happened, that Mr. Middlemist visited the cottage on the evening of this day, and was fated to listen to a repetition of all that Mrs. Glassington had thought, and said about Mabella, and it was more than we have recorded in this chapter; and so great was his pleasure, his interest in the subject, or his politeness, that he did not once interrupt the lady. She did not, however, tell him plainly the scheme she had planned for herself; she only hinted, that she meant again to appear in the world, whether her brother consented to let his daughter go, or not.

As Mrs. Glassington fancied she had some hold on Middlemist, she expected to see him either surprised, or agitated,

or both, by such a hint, concluding, that he must think as she did, that she was a very likely woman to have offers, and make advantageous matches; but, if he thought so, he did not express it, nor did he utter a word, or move a muscle of his face, from the commencement of her oration to the end of it. When she had finished, she paused a little, and then said, "Well, now, Mr. Middlemist! what do you think?" and this she repeated twice, before he answered. "I never venture to think, Ma'am, on such high subjects."

"There now, Jenny, I hope you are answered," cried the captain; "it's all nonsense you are talking! you know very well, that we can hardly get on at all, with these heavy taxes and dear times, and it is utterly impossible that we should ever raise enough to give you a trip in search of a husband! unless our friend here will take pity on you!" This much offended Mrs. Glassington, for

which the captain was very sorry; but he wondered at it, for he had said worse to her, he thought, a hundred times before, and why she should now take fire, he could not guess. Middlemist did, though the brother did not, and he changed the conversation, by saying, that he understood Mr. Lightfoot meant to celebrate the majority of his son by roasting a bullock in Normanburn Park, and that all the tenants, as well as the neighbouring families, were invited to the fête. "I hear," said he, "that the young gentleman, who was sent to his maternal grandmother, at two years old, when he lost his mother, has, since her death, been, first, under a private tutor, or rather in a private academy in Kent, and he afterwards went abroad. He has spent some time in Greece, where he astonished the people by his singularities, as much as they did him by theirs, and he is now daily, nay hourly expected in England. It seems, the furniture at Norman-

burn not being in the Grecian taste, which is at present his mania, is to be sold; and a man from London is to fit up the house afresh. I should hardly have mentioned this, but I want to know, if there is any piece of furniture that this family would like to preserve; if there is, I shall be happy to purchase it for you, and have it, in the first instance taken to my house, as, perhaps, you might not like to bring it home here!"

The only answer, Captain Normanburn made to this, was a violent blow on the table with his fist, and as violent an oath, which, having delivered it with great effect, seemed to ease him, and clear his throat for what was to follow. "We are obliged to you; yes, Sir, we are, indeed," cried he: "but may the enemy's horse trample me to a jelly on the field, if ever I give my voice to let any of the things from Normanburn come, where I am. No! if I had not a blanket to lie on,

I would perish, rather than buy what is my own by right."

"Well, now, really, brother," said Mrs. Glassington; but her brother was satisfied with her tone, and he stopped her from proceeding; assuring her, anew, that neither he, nor his brother, would give shelter to even a halfpenny porringer from the house.

CHAP. IV.

Regrets.—An Act of Heroism.—A Stranger.

Mr. Middlemist was so satisfied with the captain's declaration, that he never again mentioned the sale at Normanburn House, though his curiosity made him attend it: he wished to see the house and the grounds, and the sale of the furniture was a favourable opportunity to gratify his desire. As to the Purlbeck family, they felt all their old irritation revive on this occasion, and Mrs. Glassington did not dare even to hint her wish to have something out of the house. She thought the things would go cheap, and and in this opinion Mrs. Bleathead concurred with her. The thought at first gave her pleasure, but, remembering that the family consequence would be lessened by the furniture proving of small value,

her pride got so far the mastery over her resentment, as to make her wish they might sell well.

But nothing hurt Mrs. Glassington so much as the threatened fête on the new heir of Normanburn coming of age, and the discussions, this topic gave rise to, informed Mabella fully of every little circumstance in the history of her grandmother, and her merciless parent, and she learned to hold the name of Lightfoot in abhorrence, and to begin to wish that she was once more in that rank of life, to which she was born. To own the truth, however, Mabella did this much like a parrot, echoing back the complaints and lamentations of those about her, and entering for a time into their feelings; but, when she was alone, she forgot it all again, and pursued with unabated perseverance her usual occupations.

From the time the fête was mentioned, till that when it took place, was an interval of about four months, and the

whole country rang with the noise of the preparations, that were making for the reception of company, and the great improvements going forward: and it is singular enough, that the constant repetition of these reports by Mrs. Bleathead, created in Mrs. Glassington the strongest desire to be present at the fête. Without considering how exceedingly indelicate, unfeeling, and improper this wish was, she spent several hours in cosultation with Mrs. Bleathead, discoursing on the practicability of going without being known; and that good lady agreed, that if she had an invitation herself, she would take Mrs. Glassington with her, as her cousin from York. When this arrangement was made, poor Mrs. Glassington had still two great difficulties; the one, to procure proper dress and ornaments for the occasion, and the other, to govern her own tongue so well, as not herself to reveal her intention. This was not so easy a thing as the reader may imagine,

for she was so little accustomed to lay any restraint on herself, that she was many times on the point of mentioning it; and her old habit of uttering her thoughts aloud, even on subjects of importance, and in cases, where the welfare of her family was much concerned, proved almost too powerful for her. Curiosity, and a longing desire to appear once more in public, and to be seen, where every body else was to be seen, did, however, for once, what prudence and propriety had never been able to do; and she contrived to save a little money from necessary uses, with which, through the agency of Mrs. Bleathead, she intended to decorate her person.

This important matter so entirely occupied her, that she passed more of her time with Mrs. Bleathead than ever; and as Mabella was not to be in the secret, she was invariably left to her own independent rambles. These were not, however, so various as they had been in the earlier part of the year, for, by the fer-

ment that had been excited in the family, she had learnt to think of Normanburn, and to think of it with regret; and she every day commenced her walk by visiting that part of the wooded hill, that afforded her a fine view of that mansion and domain, from which she was so cruelly cut off. She began, too, to see why her father was so unlike other people, and to ascribe his singularities to the right cause; and the reflections, this view of his case occasioned, by strongly exciting her pity, produced a degree of tenderness towards him, till then unfelt.

As she stood, one day, gazing earnestly at the house, and admiring the beautiful trees that were now in their summer dress of varied green, untouched by the gilding hand of autumn, she began to wonder, whether the inside of the house corresponded in elegance with the outside, and could not help wishing to take a peep at it, before the workmen should quit it, and the family return;

but, aware of the displeasure she should incur by undertaking to gratify such a wish, she checked it in its birth, and pursued her walk. The next day, however, she was again on the same spot, and the next, and the next; and weeks passed away, and she still visited it.

Mabella had seen the trees at Normanburn mix the lighter green of the midsummer shoot with that she had before admired, and even begin, here and there, to change that green for the russet, before she perceived any movements in the park, that indicated preparations for the approaching festival; and, though she understood it was not to take place till the 14th of August, she watched with childish impatience, throughout the month of July.

The weather proved extremely hot, and she did not find it agreeable to quit the shelter of the wood, but contrived to mount to the necessary height on the hill, to enjoy her view, by making her way

among the trees, and, sometimes, through the underwood.

One day, when it was more sultry than usual, at the beginning of August, she left the cottage immediately after dinner, that is, about two o'clock, and with nothing to shelter her but a large straw hat, become brown from age and weather, and a coloured linen handkerchief, thrown over her shoulders, she hied to her favourite wood. She had borrowed her uncle's volume of Shakspeare, which contained Hamlet, Othello, and Romeo and Juliet, and proposed to seat herself on the stump of a tree, at some height on the hill, and to read the last of these compositions, which she had hitherto done only partially. She reached her favourite spot, much heated, and, throwing off her hat and handkerchief, for she was shaded by the surrounding trees, she enjoyed the pleasant effect of the very little air, there was, moving her tresses, which hung in native beauty over her shoulders: then,

taking her book from her pocket, she began her play, which, indeed, she devoured rather than read; and, though she did not feel exactly with Juliet, (for she knew no such overwhelming love, though she had a most affectionate heart) yet she pitied her, most sincerely. With the Capulets she was very angry, and she thought, if she had been the Friar, she would have taken care to have been in time to prevent Romeo from taking the poison.

When she had concluded her Tragedy, and wiped her eyes, she perceived that the sun was already far on his journey to the west; but she could not go home without looking at Normanburn, and observing whether or not they had begun to *lead* the corn. She tied the strings of her hat together, and, carrying it on her arm, like a basket, was not long before she reached a part of the hill, that gave her the view she desired. It was indeed a rich and exhilarating scene, that then

presented itself to her, and gilded with the rays of a glorious sun. A beautiful river wound through a rich and woody country, interspersed with fine mansions, and comfortable cottages. The corn, now in a great measure cut, was abundant, the labourers were working with glee at the harvest, and gave life and animation to the scene.

It produced, however, in the breast of Mabella a sensation of pathetic sorrow, rather than of joy, and her little heart swelled in her bosom. She felt as if it would have expanded to bless her fellow creatures, and to share with them the favours of fortune, had she possessed them, and, (softened, perhaps, by the tender scene she had been reading) she wept, and sobbed aloud. The hardship of being deprived of Normanburn was now felt with great force, and she wished that she might one day have an opportunity of shewing, that it would not have been ill bestowed upon her. Many new

ideas passed through her mind, and she would, probably, have remained there, till the sun had set, had she not been roused by the bell at Mr. Bleathead's, which, though faintly heard, informed her that the hour was a late hour. She turned hastily, and descending rapidly, in order to gain the more frequented path at the bottom of the hill, she arrived at a pretty green flat, overshadowed by a majestic oak.

On this flat, reader, she saw a man, dressed in linen trowsers and a fustian jacket, laid fast asleep; and, (guess her horror) a large snake, full three feet long, but which appeared to her three yards long, advancing directly towards him. Had she been armed with a stick, she would have thrown it at the reptile; but having nothing but her hat on her arm, she threw that, and uttered at the same time a piercing shriek, that awoke the stranger. He started up, and snatching a branch of a tree that was at no

great distance, he soon dispatched the snake. While he was doing this, Mabella stood, as if petrified! indeed, fear, spite of her wish to flee, fixed her to the spot; fear, no less of the man, than of the snake. When the stranger had killed his enemy, he advanced towards her, and she then made an effort to run away; but he held her by the hand, and said: "Nay, my pretty preserver, I shall not suffer you to leave me without thanking you for the effort you made to save me! Besides, my dear, you have not your bonnet—come, let me put it on! though it is really a pity to cover such lovely ringlets as those!"

There was a want of propriety in the manner, as well as matter of this address, that offended Mabella, who felt her rank, as heiress of Normanburn, though it was evident enough the stranger, judging by her dress, mistook her for a cottager's daughter; and, disengaging one hand, and taking the hat with the other, she

said, "I am glad I have saved your life, good man, and now I desire you will thank me no more." She then walked on a few paces, the stranger gazing at her with evident surprise. "Good man!" repeated he, "well! that is a little odd!" then, joining her again, he said, "Well, my dear, if I'm not to thank you any more, allow me to beg a favor of you."

"A favor?" cried Mabella, looking earnestly at him.

"Yes, my pretty girl, a favor," said he, "it is, to sell me the hat that proved so useful a weapon in your hands, and to purchase one better suited to the lovely head that wears it, with this purse!" at the same time, offering her a purse, which seemed to have more than one bank note, and some silver in it. The indignation poor Mabella felt, at having money offered to her, in this manner, as if she was a mere peasant, was evident in her countenance, and, without at all considering, that her dress was that of a rustic, she

bitterly resented being taken for one. She stopped a moment, and eyeing the stranger in no very pleasant manner, she said, angrily: "I choose to go home alone, and I desire you will not affront me again."

"Affront you! why, how the deuce should the offer of a new bonnet affront such a girl as you?" replied the stranger: "I don't understand these airs! but, however, I am too much obliged to you, and feel too much respect for your modesty, to press the matter any further. I should be sorry to part in anger, when I have so much reason to remember you with pleasure, and though *you* will not take my present, perhaps you may have a father, a brother, or a lover, who will! Tell me where I shall find them, or let me go home with you." There was something in the stranger's manner of saying this, that accorded too well with Mabella's own disposition, to suffer her to retain her childish anger, and, besides,

it was the first time any one had seriously supposed she could have a lover! She blushed deeply, and casting down her eyes, said; "Good man, nobody belonging to me would take money for doing a humane action, so pray keep it! we do not want it! There are often snakes about the path you were in, and I have sometimes found the cast skins of vipers, so let me advise you not to lie down again in that low spot. Good night." She then once more set off at a quick pace, but not quick enough to prevent the stranger from again overtaking her.

"You are a very extraordinary cottage maid," said he, "do let me know your name! by the lightness and grace of your movements, and the exquisite beauty of your countenance, I could fancy you a sylph, or a fairy! perhaps you are the queen of the fairies?"

"Yes, I am!" said Mabella, half smiling, and pleased, perhaps, with flattery, new to her ear. "Ah! I see you are a

siren," replied the stranger; "but do tell me your name! I shall never forget it, I promise you."

By this time, the shades of evening began to fall, and Mabella knew that the next turn in the path would bring her within sight of the orchard at Purlbeck; she felt an indescribable repugnance to take the stranger home with her, or to let him know where she lived; judging, truly enough, that let him be whom he would, but more particularly, if he was, as she supposed, merely a young farmer, her papa would be extremely angry with her for having spoken to him: she once more stopped, then, and answered; "My name is Mab, and I promise you, if you go any further with me, or look after me, I will kill all your cows! I choose to go alone, Sir, and all the return I ask for the favor you say I have done you, is, to let me do so: if you go with me, or if you follow me, or ever speak to me, my friends will be very angry with me, and you might

occasion the first quarrel I ever had with them." "By heaven!" answered the stranger, "you are irresistible! and I would not give you pain, for the world! but won't you grant me a farewell kiss?"

"What, me?" said Mabella, "me? I would not forgive your asking me for one! Pray leave me! pray do!"

The stranger looked as if he was hesitating whether to take the kiss he had asked for, or not; but Mabella's evident consternation induced him to pity her, and, taking her hand, he pressed it fervently to his lips, and then, with only "Good night!" returned the way he came.

Poor Mabella remained a few minutes fixed to the spot; she was altogether astonished, and moved at what had passed, and she returned slowly home, where she arrived time enough to make her papa's tea.

CHAP. V.

A Scheme.—A Quarrel.—Symptoms of Love—and Anger—and Forgiveness.—A Dream.

"LORD bless me, honey!" cried Mrs. Beale, as Mabella entered the house, "I began to think you was lost! t' evening shuts in, and t' Captain's been axing for you, and in a gurt taking, I promise you. I've just carried in t' teapot." Without making any answer, Mabella hurried into the parlour, where she found her uncle alone, and rather impatient for his tea.

Mrs. Glassington was at Burnthwaite, and the poor man had wanted a companion; a circumstance that, perhaps, increased his uneasiness for Mabella, whom he welcomed with a kiss; reproaching her with staying out too long. She apologized for having done so, and

laid the blame on Romeo and Juliet, adding, that she had saved a man's life, and describing how. The Captain, who liked the marvellous, asked to hear all particulars, and Mabella related all, except the conversation that had passed, and this she was restrained by modesty, as well as fear of blame, from repeating. The Captain asked what kind of a man he was; and Mabella described him, as he appeared to her, a sort of farmer. Her papa came down to tea, and the story was repeated to him; he made no other observation upon it, but that Mabella must not go alone into the wood, if there were strangers in it; to which the Captain assented, adding, that the snakes were a sufficient objection.

Poor Mabella sighed at hearing this, for, somehow, she felt at that moment a great desire to visit the wood, and had intended to do so, in a day or two; but she said nothing, and a conversation on

harvest-weather succeeding, no more mention was made of her adventure. Mabella then lighted a candle, and sat down to her work, to which she attended so diligently, that she had mended a large hole in her uncle's stocking, before Mrs. Glassington made her appearance. That lady entered the room in great spirits, and full charged with news respecting the intended fête at Normanburn. Young Lightfoot, she said, was arrived with several friends, and a vast number of beds was to be made up in the house, and the invitations were universal! The Bleatheads were asked, and Mr. Middlemist was asked, and all the families in the country would be there, except themselves.

"Well, Jenny, let them!" said the Captain: "on such an occasion as the heir of Normanburn coming of age, *we* alone have a right to be presiding in that house; and poor, and lame, and

disappointed as I am, I would not change places with Lightfoot, or his heartless son."

"Nay, now, brother!" answered the sister, "you have no right to call the young man heartless, for he is not answerable for the sins of his father; and Mr. Bleathead, who saw him to-day, says he is a very surprising, fine young man; it is not fair to make him out bad."

"I wish he may *not* be bad! at best he is not delicate," said the Captain; "or, knowing, as he must know, how near we are, and that this rightful Heiress of Normanburn is within hearing of the bells that will ring on the occasion, he would have been quietly of age, ten times over, rather than have made any roasting or feasting on the day! He is a villain, Jenny, depend upon it! the worthy son of a worthy father!"

"Well, now, Lucius, that is so unlike your usual gentleness, and forgiving

temper!" cried Mrs. Glassington; "I don't see, myself, that the young man is to blame; and, I dare say, that if any of us were to go, he would receive us with more marked politeness than any other of the families."

While Mrs. Glassington was uttering this speech, the eye of her brother opened wider and wider, till at last it looked as if a hair-breadth further would make it leap from its socket; his lips remained wide apart, his nostrils were dilated, and his sword-hand made a movement, as if to grasp the hilt of his weapon; when she had done, he said:

"Us? Us go? If I thought any human being in this family was inclined to set foot in the house, or had so little principle, as to hold any communication with the enemy, I would myself—yes! I would myself—but no matter! no—no matter!"

"Lord bless me, Captain! why, you are enough to frighten one, with your

military airs!" said Mrs. Glassington; "I have lived to see how foolish quarrelling is, and I don't see, myself, what harm there would be in going incog., just to look at all the old connexions of the family, who are all to be there."

"More shame for them!" cried the Captain; "if there had been any virtue left in the county, not one of them would ever have countenanced the usurper! but money is now every thing! and if my grandmother had left the estate to the Devil himself, they would have been ready to admire his brimstone feasts, and praise his virtues! But, pray, sister, never speak again about this fellow! the subject is more than I can bear, and I would not have John hear any thing about it. Let us all keep quiet within our boundaries, while this abominable affair is going forward, and when it is over, I suppose the young villain will be off to the Races!"

"Nay, as to keeping quiet, brother,

that would be giving the usurper, as you call him, a triumph; and, as to my own part, I have just promised Mrs. Bleathead to go and help her to dress, and stay at the Rectory, while she goes to Normanburn," said Mrs. Glassington.

This information was so unpleasant to the Captain, that he testified great wrath with Mrs. Glassington for having made such an engagement, and reproached her with the visible change there was in her sentiments, respecting the family wrongs: for his own part, he said, he should not easily be reconciled to Mrs. Glassington, if she kept her engagement, and he was sure John would prevent her, if it was mentioned to him. At this observation, the lady took fire! she asserted her independence, and that no brother had a right to control her, and say, "Go here," or "Go there;" she said, that her dear friend, Mrs. Bleathead, relied on her as a dresser; and that she could not now disappoint her:

she should stay all night at the Rectory, and come home in the morning.

This was more than the Captain could bear with patience, and he began a string of bitter reproaches, which threw Mrs. Glassington into a violent hysteric, and brought Mr. Normanburn down stairs. The poor Captain's heart smote him bitterly for having spoken so unadvisedly with his lips, and, in his eagerness to give his sister help, he threw the contents of his snuff-box in her face: the effect was admirable; the lady's cries and sobs were changed into sneezings, and she was soon restored to herself. Both parties had discretion enough to conceal the cause of quarrel from Mr. Normanburn, who retreated again to his room, and Mabella attended her aunt to bed, and sat by her side some time, before she herself joined her.

When Mabella, at length, laid her head upon her pillow, it was not (for the first time since her childhood) to sleep;

she had indeed no inclination to taste of that refreshing semi-death, but lay with her eyes wide open, and felt as if she was recovering from some sudden alarm. It seemed to her, that the day, since noon, had been of more than ordinary length, and she dwelt upon the events that had distinguished it, with an intenseness of thought, that could not well have been increased. Unconscious of her own motive, she placed the back of that hand, the stranger had kissed so fervently, and so respectfully, upon her lips; and while it was in that enviable situation, (at least so the stranger would have thought) she mentally repeated every word he had uttered; particularly the last "Good night!" which, to own the truth, was pronounced with a sweetness of tone and manner, that was worth remembering.

When this first pleasurable recollection began to relax a little, she wondered that a young man, who could behave so well, should have thought of offering any body

money for so trifling a service! a thing nobody could help doing! At first, she condemned this violently, as a mark of a narrow, ungenerous mind; and, "*I* would not have done so," was mentally repeated, more than once. When she had felt much more anger than the incident seemed to deserve, she began to excuse the stranger, and to remember, that, from his expressions, it was evident he took her for a cottager's daughter, "and if he did that," said she, "he acted I think, very right. Money might have done good to a poor cottage girl, and, perhaps, after all, he may not be a farmer, but a gentleman. I should think he is, by giving away his money so generously; it was very generous in him, to be sure; and, altogether, he behaved very well, indeed!" Then she unfortunately remembered that he had dared to ask for a kiss! the hand was instantly removed, and she wondered how he dared take such a liberty with *her!* the heiress of Nor-

manburn! Mabella, however, was too just to continue this anger long, for she again recollected that she was thought to be only a poor girl, and she had heard her uncle say, that, in some countries, and even in some parts of our own, the wo-med are affronted, if they are not asked for one. " I should choose to be just," thought Mabella, replacing the hand; "I remember the text " Judge not lest thou be judged."

An hour and a half at least had elapsed in this way, when Mabella found the heat of the room insupportable, for it was a very sultry night, and, getting up, she opened the window a little. This awoke Mrs. Glassington, who sc lded her for disturbing her, and asked if she had not been asleep? Mabella owned that she had not, on which her aunt bid her go to sleep directly, and not play any tricks! adding, that she thought, for her part, the whole house was bewitched, or in a plot against her. To this Mabella replied

only by a deep sigh, and her aunt again sunk into a sound sleep. Not so poor Mabella; she remained awake the greater part of the night, and when, at last, she did sleep, it was to dream, that the snake was coiled round the stranger's throat, and that she in vain endeavoured to relieve him from it. Such sleep was far from refreshing, and the first rays of the morning found Miss Normanburn rather more weary than when she went to bed the preceding night.

CHAP. VI.

The Handkerchief.—More Quarrels.

THE first thing that Molly Beale said to Miss Normanburn, when she went down the following morning, was, "Where's my hanketcher, my honey? you did not gi m't back again."

"No, Molly, indeed I did not," said the young lady, "it is in my hat, and I will bring it down when I carry up my aunt's breakfast; she is not at all well to-day, she says, and must have her breakfast before she gets up."

The reader will gather from this, that the hysteric of the evening had affected Mrs. Glassington pretty severely: and, indeed, so the lady said, and, in consequence of her alarms, she was obliged to lie a-bed till eleven the next morning. Mabella carried up her breakfast, and

helped her to dress, and then looked for the handkerchief, which, in her hurry to begin her walk the preceding day, she had borrowed from Mrs. Beale's drawer in the kitchen, in order to save herself the trouble of going up stairs again. But she looked in vain! the handkerchief was not to be found, and she was obliged to tell Molly, that she was afraid she must have dropped it out of her hat, as she returned from her walk! news by no means agreeable to that good person.

"What!" cried she, in a loud key, "you ha'nt surely lost t' hanketcher, bairn? I'd as leave you'd ta'en my best gown, and riven it a bits! Why that hanketcher's what my gurt nevy, Tom Beale, sent me from Manchester by t' auld tramp, at comes aboot yance i' t' twelvemonth, and you knaw bairn, you marked it single thread 'for me wi' t' nizzles o' my name. I vally it boon t' price on't, and if I'd a thowght you'd a

been so careless on't, I'd niver a lent it to you; noa, that I wadunt!"

"I'm very sorry, Molly," answered Mabella, "that I took it, and that I have lost it, but so few people go through the way I walked yesterday, that I dare say I shall find it again."

"Aye! an if you do, a pretty pickle it ull be in, noo when 't dews is so heavy, morn and night," said Mrs. Beale; "what! I mun wash it, I reckon, to mak it owt like decent again, and it ull be as yallow as my smock? It war t' prattiest hanketcher I ivir had i' my life! if it war n't enough to mak a body roar again to leuk at it! An you knew that, Miss Bell, for I've shewed it to you mony a time! There was that poor, auld King Loose, wi' his hair all shrivelled, as Madam Glassington called it, a taking leave o' his bairns afore he went his long journey, and a piteous sight he war! and then his wife war a leuking for all the warld.—

Lard a marcy honey!" cried Molly, changing her tone of reproach for one of compassion, "why what's t' matter wi' you? if you don't leuk as oot o' sorts, as she did; what's t' matter?"

In reply to this question, Mabella stated her sorrow for the loss of this precious handkerchief with King Louis and the royal family, and said, that she would go and seek it, as soon as dinner was over. "But I must not stay out late, Molly, so pray, let us have dinner a quarter of an hour earlier, to give me time," continued she, "I am almost quite certain I shall find it again, and, if I do not, I will get Mrs. Bleathead to buy you another, when she goes to York or to Harrogate! so pray now, Molly, don't say any more about it; you can't be more sorry than I am." This appeased Molly, and the bustle she put herself in, to hurry dinner, prevented her from saying any thing more about the handkerchief.

When the family met at dinner, the

Captain expressed his sorrow for having agitated his sister so much by his hasty manner of speaking, and the sister was about to reply; but the entrance of Mr. Normanburn prevented the further discussion of the subject, as the parties concerned equally feared his knowing any thing about it. Dinner passed in almost total silence, and when her papa retired to a shady walk in the garden, where he often passed many hours alone, Mabella cleared the table, and left the Captain and his sister to begin once more a subject that heated them both.

It was so novel in this peaceable house to have any thing seriously to quarrel about, that it appeared, as if a new æra had commenced, and though the beginning of the conversation was pacificatory, it soon rose to a higher tone, and a debate ensued, not at all calculated to promote love and harmony. The Captain insisted that it would be very wrong in his sister to be known to be at

Burnthwaite, aiding Mrs. Bleathead, who was in alliance with the enemy; and that, for his part, he should never forgive her, or love her as he had done, if, after this warning, she persisted in going; while his sister, on the contrary, said, that she was above such narrow ways of thinking, and that she should not give up a pleasant engagement for any brother in the world. Besides, young Lightfoot had nothing to do with taking the estate; he was but a boy, a mere baby, when Mrs. Normanburn left it to his father; he had had a good education, was a very fine young man, and by his manner of beginning his life among his neighbours, shewed that he had a noble spirit of his own: for her part, she thought that it would be a very politic thing to seek his acquaintance, rather than shun it, and as Bell was a fine girl, if it was properly managed, as she would manage it, if she might, she saw no reason why the heiress of Norman-

burn might not become the lawful mistress of it.

This plain avowal of her sentiments produced a violent fit of passion in the poor Captain, who vowed, that, well as he loved Bell, he would willingly follow her to her grave before the year was out, rather than see her the wife of Lightfoot, even supposing him to be all his sister had said; and this was again followed by reproaches on the meanness of spirit that could urge such a plan; reproaches which Mrs. Glassington returned with interest, and which so occupied the speakers that they did not hear a thunder-storm which approached gradually for a considerable time, and, at last, became pretty loud, and played an admirable base to their treble and tenor.

The whole of the afternoon was spent, as we have described; and, probably, the whole of the evening would, too, but for the arrival of the Bleatheads and Mr.

Middlemist, who came to take their tea, and enjoy a cool walk home again. They found the Captain, with his waistcoat thrown open, and his face of a deep crimson colour, uttering a very violent speech against his sister; while that good lady, standing with her back against the wall, was, in an equally elevated tone, calling him an unnatural bear, and raising her closed fist, as if she had been inclined to box him. They both looked a little ashamed at being discovered in this inflamed state, and the Captain, taking Middlemist by the arm, retired with him to his own little room, leaving Mrs. Glassington to entertain the Bleatheads. With her usual unguarded loquacity, she informed Mr. and Mrs. Bleathead of the sentiments of her brother, with respect to her staying at Burnthwaite, and added, that she was determined to do as she liked, and not to consult any body.

Now it so happened, that Mr. Bleathead was not in the secret of her inten-

tion to go to Normanburn; he knew no more than what his wife had told him, that she would come to the Rectory, and help her to dress, and he did not comprehend, why this should give offence to the Captain. He felt his own consequence somewhat affronted by it, and he determined to argue the matter with the Captain, and convince him that he was wrong! justly concluding, that a man bred to arms could have little chance in the field of reason and fair argument, with one who was in the daily practice of discussing high subjects. He comforted Mrs. Glassington with the assurance, that he would bring her brother round in no time to a rational way of thinking, and settle the whole matter entirely to her satisfaction. His lady added, that she would do her do, too, and that she did not doubt the Captain would hear reason. "Indeed," said she, "to do the parson justice, he is a very fine, powerful preacher, and can keep on at it by t' hoor together! and

us two women have tongues," (here Bleathead groaned) "and we won't be niggards of 'em. Well, it's a mercy we've got here without a peenomeena again! I think we're fated to bring nowt but routs, and thunder! do hear how it grummles owr t' backside, there! I promise you, my dear Mrs. Glossumtun, an if I'd knowd this, I'd never a set my foot owr t' threshold to come to day. I was i' twenty minds whether to turn back or no!'

"I'm sure, it's a mercy you did not," said Mrs. Glassington, for you've may be saved my life! there's no knowing what the Captain would hare proceeded to next!"

"He can nat heve cammitted violance apan you, Madam," said Bleathead, "without a vast of risk to himself; and, tharefore, I hope he wad nat heve attempted it."

"Nay, there's no knowing," cried the lady; "you men, when you're heated,

right or wrong, you're no better than mad things! many a poor wife's killed, I believe, by a blow, and nobody the wiser! but, however, my brother is not such a brute to strike a woman! that I do believe; so I don't think he would quite have killed me! But, dear, I see it rains at a distance! well, it will cool the air; I'm terribly hot myself."

"Yas, yas, so I perceive," said Bleathead drily; "Yow will bay cooler, as the night approaches."

"We see nothing of the storm, o' this side t' hoose!" said Mrs. Bleathead; "it's all owr t' wood, an Pike Hill! I'm glad of it, for, if any peenómeenas falls, they'll light there."

This observation was followed by a sort of half sigh, half groan, from Bleathead, who had never succeeded in his attempts to explain to his wife, what he meant by phenomena, and by an inquiry from the lady for Miss Normanburn; and as the reader too may be desirous of know-

ing what is become of that young lady, we will leave the good company within doors, and attend to her movements in another chapter.

CHAP. VII.

Which being in its Consequences one of the most important in the Book, will, we trust, be read twice by every Female or Male Reader, happy enough to be in love.

In her eagerness and anxiety to recover Mrs. Beale's handkerchief, Miss Normanburn forgot the prohibition to retrace her walk of the day before, that was implied in what her pápa and her uncle had said; and, as she did not doubt that the precious loan had fallen from her hat, when she threw it at the snake, she made haste to visit the spot once more; hoping that by going early she might arrive before any straggler should pick up what she had lost She put on her hat and tippet, and, quitting the house by the kitchen door, went directly to the place where she expected to find it. Her walk, how-

ever, was not performed without one or two pauses, at which the reader will not wonder, if he considers the heat of the weather. The first was at that turn in the path where the stranger had left her, and, while he was by the force of imagination again present to her view, she repeated, "good night!" and then proceeded.

But, as she proceeded, her step became slower, and she loitered in the path, willing to persuade herself that she was afraid of meeting with him again.

"I hope I shall not see him any more! my papa will be so angry!" said she to herself, at the same time peeping among the trees, and wondering whether every shadow could be he. Her alarm, however, was quite without foundation, for the stillness of the day was interrupted only by the carolling of the birds, and the distant noise of the harvest men! she reached the tree, under which the stranger had offered her his purse; she remem-

bered his animated countenance, and she went on to the oak, under whose spreading branches she had seen him laid.

It was here that Mabella expected to find the precious handkerchief, as well as the dead snake, and when she had a full view of the ground, she stood and reconnoitred it; being unwilling to go too near the reptile, even when it was dead. With her arms folded across her bosom, she remained several minutes, as if fixed to the spot, and to own the truth, during those minutes, the snake, and the handkerchief were forgotten; she thought only of the stranger, and measured with her eye the space his person had occupied; then, suddenly recollecting herself, she went nearer to the tree. But her consternation was very great, when, on inspection, she could neither find snake, nor handkerchief; and she walked over the ground, at least a dozen times, examining minutely every tuft of grass, or of wild plants. "Good God! what shall I do!"

cried she. "I was sure of finding it here! I know it was in my hat, just as I came down here! how can it be lost? and the snake is gone, too! then some body has been here, and picked it up, and we shall never see it again! Oh! what will they say to me?"

"That you are an angel!" said the stranger, suddenly appearing at her side, "and I am really thankful that a lucky chance, I did not venture to hope for, should have again presented you to my sight, and afforded me, once more, an opportunity of thanking you for your humanity!" It was not difficult for the stranger to perceive, that the terror, his sudden appearance occasioned Mabella, was real, and that she was in great distress, on some subject or other; he took her unresisting hand, and drawing her arm through his, led her to a little rise among the trees, where he had been sitting, when she first appeared, and from whence he was sketching the beautiful

oak, under which his adventure had happened. He seated her upon his camp stool, which he took out with him when he purposed to draw, and throwing himself on the ground beside her, he said, "I see you are in distress, my fair preserver, but I flatter myself, that I am not the cause of it! Be assured that in me you will find a defender, if ever it should please Providence to expose you to the want of one, and to give you pleasure, or to do you good, would be my greatest pride."

Mabella had by this time recovered her recollection, and with that simplicity of manner, which never fails to charm and interest, particularly in a lovely girl almost sixteen, she answered: "No! you are not the cause of my distress, I assure you! and I thank you for your good will! but I have lost a handkerchief—a common, printed handkerchief! I believe it is not worth much, but it was a present—a keep sake! have you found it, Sir?

Had Mabella been a connoisseur in countenance, she would have seen that the pleasure excited by the first part of her answer was destroyed by the second; the stranger blushed, and asked in return, if she was very anxious about the handkerchief?

"Yes, indeed, I am!" said she, "very anxious! I came out on purpose to find it! I would not take one twice its value for it!"

The stranger looked earnestly in her face, and seeing that she appeared very solicitous to know, whether he had the handkerchief or not, he said,

"What would you give to recover it, my lovely wonder?"

"I have no money," said Mabella, "I have nothing but thanks to give! and if you have it—you look as if you had, I beg you will give it to me! Keepsakes are valuable, you know!"

"Well, then," said the stranger, "I *will* return it to you! I had intended to keep it for *your* sake, and as a memorial

of that adventure which first offered you to my sight! But, it is as well, better as it is! I cannot forget, either how I was saved, or by whom; and all I have to request in return for thus yielding up my prize, is, to know your name." At the same time he drew the handkerchief from his pocket, and laid it on her lap.

With all the simplicity of childhood, and the warmth of feeling natural to fifteen, Mabella no sooner saw the wished-for prize, than she eagerly seized it, and started from the seat, crying, "Oh! how glad I am! thank you ten thousand times! I am so happy! I was wretched to lose the handkerchief! don't detain me, Sir; farewell!"

The stranger, however, did detain her; he said, that she had not performed her part of their engagement; and she should not go till she had! he must know her name, as, at some future time, he might be more able to testify his gratitude in a manner pleasing to herself, than he now

was. All this was said in an earnest, and even a respectful manner; and Mabella involuntarily exclaimed, in reply, "What's in a name?" and she said it in a tone of voice, that shewed she was quoting, and not simply asking a question. The stranger looked surprised, and answered, "I am not to be satisfied by an excuse, even from Shakspeare!" though, how *you* happen to quote him, I can hardly guess! did you ever read his plays?"

"Some of them; but I have only one volume!" answered Mabella; "but, farewell, Sir! I must go home: you have done me a great favour to keep the handkerchief so clean, and dry; I should have been grieved, if it had been wetted by the dew."

"You seem deeply interested in the handkerchief, and you are more than any other creature I ever saw interesting," said the stranger! "but I have no right—and, perhaps," added he, "it would be wisdom in me not to inquire any thing more

about you, either what is your name, your abode, or your situation in life; yet I long most ardently to know! Will you oblige me? will you tell me how it is, that a girl of your appearance has so much the air of a gentlewoman, and quotes Shakspeare, and with a face and form of such exquisite beauty retains all the naïveté and bewitching simplicity of innocent childhood? But, I see, I distress you, and, for my own sake, I must say, adieu! tell me only to whom I say it."

Poor Mabella, whose spirits had been sinking as the stranger proceeded, and who was, however, certainly not unconscious, either of the eulogium on her manners, or her person, half smiled and burst into a flood of tears, which she endeavoured to conceal by putting the handkerchief to her face: without making any reply, she waved her hand, and turned towards Purlbeck, somewhat ashamed of her weakness, though she did not know why she need be ashamed of it. She had

proceeded about a dozen yards, when the stranger again approached her. "I have no right to tease you, or to intrude on you," said he, "but I have received from your humanity the greatest blessing, as it is usually accounted, at least, that one human being can receive from another: you evidently are reluctant to tell me your name, and though I wish most earnestly to know it, I wave the question; but I cannot consent that you should go alone in this unfrequented place, and you must allow me to attend you, at least, to a place of safety."

"Not for the world!" exclaimed Mabella: "I must go alone, Sir; indeed, I must! you do not know what trouble it might occasion me to be seen with you; indeed, nothing but this handkerchief would have brought me again into this wood! I wish you happy, and I hope you will not insist on either knowing my name, my family, or my abode!" She then again turned towards home; but the

stranger took her hand, and with a look that bent the eyes of his fair preserver to the earth, said:

"Why you should object so strongly to make yourself known, I cannot divine; but I feel, that known, or unknown, you will dwell in my memory for ever! I would not so part with you, however, if I had, or could ever have any right to solicit an interest in your mind; but that is impossible! at least, as far as—no! it is better, much better, and we must and ought to part for ever! both for your sake, and mine!"

The melancholy tone, in which the stranger pronounced the last words, was too much in unison with Mabella's feelings not to make a deep impression on her; she repeated the words *for ever*, in a faint voice; and the stranger dropping her hand, she proceeded on her way. She felt an unusual agitation, and as if she should be hardly able to reach home without sitting down, for her legs shook

under her, and her head swam exceedingly; but conscious of the impropriety of either stopping, or returning, she hurried forward about five hundred yards, and then fell to the ground in a fainting fit.

When she recovered her senses, she found herself supported by the stranger, who held her in his arms, and was watching the r turn of animation with a look of great interest. This, however, Mabella did not observe; she only opened her eyes, and closed them again, and it was still some minutes before she was able to raise her head. When she did, she put her hand to her forehead, as if the light was too strong for her, and then, disengaging herself from him, said, "I can go now, I think."

"Not without my assistance! you cannot even stand without help, yet, sweet girl!" replied he: let me persuade you, return to my seat, and remain there under my protection, till you find yourself recovered; it is yet early in the day!"

" Mabella hesitated; she looked at him with a sort of timid apprehension of doing wrong, and then said: " I believe I must sit a little, for my head is very painful!" she would then have walked back again, but the stranger took her in his arms, and carrying her to the place where his umbrella and drawing materials were left, he placed her on the seat, and kneeling beside her, supported her with his arm. He was perfectly silent, for he was agitated by contending emotions, to none of which he intended to give utterance. He had lived in the gay world, and seen and known many famed for beauty, wit and talents, but he had never seen any thing like Mabella! with beauty superior to her contemporaries, a countenance beaming with expression, and a native elegance of manner, united to rustic innocence and simplicity, that formed altogether an irresistible charm: in short, it was her perfect loveliness, that had captivated him, and he felt as if he should be blest, never to relinquish so bewitching a burden.

Fate, however, had woven a web, in which he was entangled, and while he longed to express his admiration, he felt that he should be a villain to do so! he determined, during those exquisitely pleasurable and painful moments, while he supported Mabella, he determined not again to ask either her name, situation, or abode, so that he might never after have the power to seek her to her own injury; and though he could have wished every present moment to have been prolonged to hours, he resolved not to attempt to detain her, as soon as her strength should be sufficiently restored to enable her to walk.

At first his vanity suggested to him, that agitation at parting from him had caused her faintness, (for he could not take into the account her sleepless night, which he knew nothing about) but his good sense corrected this opinion, and he imagined that the heat of the day had overpowered her, and this was, indeed,

partly the case. He supported her, then, in silence, and when at last she declared that she felt better, and could walk, as there was a little more air, he removed his arm from her person, but not without first pressing her involuntarily to his breast.

Mabella blushed, and rose from her seat, saying, "Have I got the handkerchief? I will put it in my pocket, lest I should drop it on my way." The stranger took it from the ground, and presented it to her, and she put it in her pocket; then extending her hand with all the frankness of innocence, and the modesty of virtue, she said, "Farewell, Sir! you have now repaid me in kind! therefore your debt is discharged!"

The stranger was about to reply in a very indistinct manner, when the thunder, which had been sometime rumbling at a distance, burst loudly, and the lightning played among the branches of the trees.

"Gracious God! what a situation!"

cried the stranger; "your path lies through the wood, the storm is approaching, and your life is in imminent danger; what will become of you?"

"What will become of *you*, too?" asked Mabella. Without attending to this question, he said, "The only chance we have, is, to shelter ourselves under my silk umbrella till the storm shall have passed us." To this Mabella did not object; indeed, she was too much terrified to object to any thing; and placing his seat in the most open part of the ground, he spread his umbrella, and held it so as to cover Mabella, as she sat.

The storm was severe, and they heard the noise of the harvest people in the plain below, during the intervals of the thunder. "I hope none of them will be killed!" said Mabella. "I hope not," returned the stranger, "and, indeed, I believe they are in less danger than ourselves: these trees are too attractive to escape."

"It may be so," said Mabella, "but sometimes, you know people are killed in the fields! you have heard of Gay's lovers, I dare say: I trust nobody will be killed to-day!"

As Mabella concluded the foregoing humane hope, a blaze of light seemed to surround her, and her anxious companion, who almost thought death would be sweet at such a moment, and a tremendous crash, followed by a loud clap of thunder, and a heavy shower of rain, made her throw herself into his arms. The immediate danger, however, now seemed past, for the oak before mentioned in describing this place, was split by the lightning, and the stranger, as if fearful to trust himself longer with Mabella, urged her to make the best of her way home.

"You will not object," said he, "to my accompanying you, as far as I did last night, and then, I flatter myself, you are so near home as to be out of danger! I will not ask to go farther," added he,

"but I must see you in safety to that spot."

"Indeed," answered Mabella, "you will oblige me much by doing so, for I have been so frightened; I am so weak and foolish! but I am but a child! But, you promise me not to watch where I go?"

"I do! upon the word of a gentleman!" returned the stranger: "if ever I see you again—it will, I trust, be in happier times, and with real pleasure!" To this Mabella made no reply; leaning on the stranger's arm, and wet to the skin, (for in such paths an umbrella was of no use) she reached that spot that was destined, thereforward, to be the boundary of her walks, and though the rain descended in torrents, the two companions both halted, as if by mutual consent: they looked at each other for a moment, and the stranger, suddenly letting Mabella's passive hand drop, ran off with a velocity, that, considering the

slippery state of the ground, appeared somewhat indiscreet. Miss Normanburn reached the kitchen in safety, and as she had gone out expressly to seek Mrs. Beale's handkerchief, that good woman praised the Lord for her safe return, and hastened to dry clothe her, in which she had completely succeeded, when the inquiry made after her by the Bleatheads, caused her to be summoned to the parlour.

END OF VOL. I.

[illegible],
London.